THE HISTORY

Of the LIFE of the Sublime and Illuminated DIVINE,

Dr. Joh. Thauler,

Who at *Colin* (where he lived) was in an Extraordinary and Miraculous manner turned from his vain Converſation, to an Extraordinary Degree of Sanctity and Holineſs of Life.

Together with many Precepts, Poſitions, and Sermons of his, but chiefly the Means and Occaſion, how he came to be ſo highly Illuminated and attained ſo perfect a Life, which (Divine Grace aſſiſting) proved ſo effectual in propagating the ſacred Myſteries of the Goſpel; and the Divine Seed of the Word by him ſown, brought forth ſo plentiful a Harveſt, that not undeſervedly he is eſteemed equal even to the chiefeſt Fathers of the Church.

Faithfully Tranſlated out of Latine.

LONDON,

Printed by *S. Dover*, for *L. Lloyd*, and are to be ſold at his Shop, next to the *Caſtle* in *Cornhil*, 1660.

THE TRANSLATOR TO THE CATHOLICK PROTESTANT, AND PAPAL READER.

Catholick Chriſtian,

I *Need not deſire of you, not to be offended at the* Popery *in this Book (as I my ſelf were) becauſe being* Catholick, *you have received the Vnction that teacheth you all things. And you know what in the* Babel *or* Confuſion *of Articles of Faith, Rights, Religious Cuſtoms, Inſtitutions and Ceremonies, hath been from the Spirit of Chriſt, and now uſed (or*

rather abused) *by the Spirit of Antichrist; as likewise what hath been solely from the spirit of Antichrist, and never made use of by the Spirit of Christ.*

Protestant Christian Reader, *be not offended* (*as I were*) *lest you lose the profit of this* Treatise, *as I had like to have done; you will meet with much* Popery, *and more* Christianity, *you may* (*for all me*) *condemn the former, so you do it knowingly; but prize the latter, for it is in this little* Treatise *as Savoury, as Fragrant, and as well Seasoned with Salt, as almost in any* Treatise *which hath been since the Apostles time.*

For the Popery *in this* Treatise, *there want not those that say, that the most of it is spurious, and father'd upon this highly illuminated Person, that under his Name it may have the better reputation.*

Martin Luther (*the great and valiant Witness against* Popish Tyranny *and* Superstition) *gives this Author the Title of a* Prophet, *calling him* Homo Dei, *The Man of God. And our devout*

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Martyrologiſt, Mr. J. Fox, *reckons him among thoſe, who* (*to uſe his own words*) *ſtood in open defence of Truth againſt the diſordered* Church *of* Rome.

Popiſh Chriſtian Reader, *do not boaſt that this greatly illuminated Theologiſt, was a Son of your* Church, *the People of God may be Captives in* Babylon; *and your Church with its enumerable Doctrines, Rights and Ceremonies, is no better if it be voyd of the Spirit of Chriſt. What ever Doctrins, Rights and Inſtitutions, the Spirit of Chriſt hath brought forth in the World, the ſame Spirit can only teach the profitable uſe of them; he that practiſeth them without the guidance and illumination of that Spirit, practiſeth nothing but Bodily Exerciſe & Will-Worſhip, which profiteth not. This holy Author exhorts you not to exerciſe your ſelves according to your own will in rigorous Faſtings, Penances, Proceſſions, Pilgrimages, and the like, but to reſign your ſelves to the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit of Chriſt, which ſhall*

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exercise you infinitely more profitably than if you should enjoyn your selves in your own Will and Resolution, all the Rigours and Hardships, even of all the Saints. But you will say, holy Church *enjoyns us such and such Rights. That* Church *that labours not mainly and chiefly, that Children may be born unto God, of Water and of the Spirit; and afterwards instructs such new born Children in the exercise of this their new Life; instructing them in Rights conducing thereto; doth no better than those, that should take not Children, but Apes to instruct in humane Arts and Sciences. He that cometh not to know the inward Cross and how to submit to it, and take it up dayly, and thereby grow in the knowledge of the Mysteries of it; in vain doth he bow to an outward Cross of Wood or Stone, creep unto it, kiss it, say his Prayers before it, or bear it upon his back. If these things be any thing, it is because they are Figurative and Significative of the Mystery of the inward Cross: if they*

teach

teach not, nor expreſs that, they are meerly Bodily Labour and Will-Worſhip. The like may be ſaid of moſt of the Romiſh *Rights and Inſtitutions, but it would be too tedious to uſe many Inſtances. But to conclude, if we did all learn to ſink into that profound Humility, Self-denial, and Self-Inanition, which is every where taught in this* Treatiſe, *we might thereby even in enumerable things be advantaged; whereof two or three I will reckon and conclude.*

Firſt, *We may hereby come to be Divinely touched from above, and illuminated by the Spirit of God, ſo as to be able to ſee clearly what were the Doctrins, Rights, Inſtitutions, and Ceremonies, which the ſaid Spirit taught the Primitive* Church, *before the removal of the Candleſticks; or hath ſince taught his* Church *in the Wilderneſs: and contrariwiſe what hath been brought in by the ſpirit of Error, Confuſion, and of Antichriſt.*

And

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And Secondly, *We might see that Spirit of Wrath, Fury, and bloody Discord, about Doctrines, Rights and Ceremonies, which hath a long while raged in the Christian World, be clearly discovered, hated, and banished.*

And Lastly, *We might begin to discern the new* Jerusalem *make preparation to descend from Heaven; which will put a Period to all the Miseries and Sufferings of Gods faithful Ones, and begin their everlasting day of Happiness, Joy, and Peace: Which the Lord in great Compassion hasten.*

Farewel heartily.

THE

THE HISTORY

Of the Life of the ſublime and illuminated Divine, Dr. *John Thauler*, who at *Colin* (where he lived) was in an Extraordinary and Miraculous manner turned from his vain Converſation to an Extraordinary degree of Sanctity, and Holineſs of Life.

IN the year of our Lord, One thouſand three hundred forty ſix, there lived a Doctor of Divinity in *Colin* in *Germany*, a frequent Preacher exceedingly followed, and famous for his Doctrine far and near. A certain Layman aboundantly endowed and anointed with Divine Grace, hearing his fame, and being thrice warned in a Dream to go to the City where the Doctor lived, (which was at the leaſt thirty

thirty mile diſtance from the place, where then the Layman was) reſolved with himſelf to Travel thither, and try what it would pleaſe Divine grace to bring to paſs; then he takes his journey, arrives at the City where the Doctor lived; attentively heard him five times Preach; In which while he underſtood in the Spirit, that the Doctor was by nature an ingenuous Man, of a mild, ſweet, and courteous behaviour, and excellently well skilled in the Letter of the Scripture; but obſcurely and glimeringly underſtanding it, being without the Light of Divine grace. The Layman exceedingly hereupon pittying his condition, went to him, and thus entered into diſcourſe with him. Reverend Sir, I am come above thirty miles to ſit at your feet, and hear your Doctrine, drawn by the fame of your excellent abilities, and already have I heard five of your Sermons; Therefore I beſeech you for Gods ſake vouchſafe while I ſtay here, to be my Confeſſor. The courteous Dr. refuſing not the motion; The Layman oft came to confeſſion, which he performed with much ſimplicity and humility: and when ever he thought fit to receive the moſt ſacred Body of our Lord, he received it at the Doctors hands. Twelve weeks in this manner being ſpent,

ſpent, the Layman came to the Doctor with a requeſt, which he thus uttered: Reverend Maſter, I beſeech you for Gods ſake teach us in a Sermon the moſt compendious way of attaining the higheſt degree of perfection, that this Life is capable of. What doſt thou mean Son (quoth the Doctor) to what purpoſe would it be to Preach ſuch ſublime matters to you, who (I ſuppoſe) would hardly be able to underſtand one word? Though poſſibly (anſwered the Layman) I may not (Reverend Sir) be able to underſtand you, yet at leaſt I ſhall breath and pant after, and with hearty and frequent Prayers deſire thoſe things you ſhall deliver. Beſide, a great multitude of people come together to hear you; now if but one of theſe ſhall rightly underſtand what you ſhall ſay, your labour will not be loſt. I but (ſaid the Doctor) if I ſhould be put upon that you deſire (good Son) it would coſt me firſt much pains and ſtudy, and a great deal of labour to gather what would be requiſite to the buſineſs, and to digeſt it into fit method. But whatever excuſes the Doctor made, the Layman would not give over his entreaty till the Doctor paſſed his word, that he would Preach ſuch a Sermon as he deſired. It fell out ſhortly after that the Dr.

Preach'd

Preach'd in a certain Monastry; And Sermon being ended; he told the Congregation, that those whom other business hindred not, might resort thither upon the third day following; for I am desired (quoth he) to Preach a Sermon, in which I must shew, by what means one may most compendiously come to the highest degree of perfection attainable in this Life. The third day being come, very many flocked to the place; among the rest, betimes in the morning thither hastens the *Layman*, that he might get a convenient place where he might the better hear, and understaud the Doctor. The Doctor comes as he had appointed, and begins this following Discourse.

In this following most excellent Discourse, there are laid down four and twenty points, by which may be known who are truly illuminated men, and true contemplators.

SO great & many things (dearly beloved) are to be handled at this time touching the Argument, I lately promised to discourse upon, that according to my constant custome, I cannot take the Gospel of the day for my Text, nor use many *Latine* words.

But

But notwithſtanding thoſe matters that I ſhall handle, ſhall be ſuch as may be eaſily confirmed out of Scripture.

In the firſt place (beloved) I would not have you ignorant, how there are very many to be found, who attain to a clear knowledge, underſtanding, and a rational decerning in Heavenly matters; but it is altogether by Images and Forms in their fancy; impreſſed there ſometimes by the ſtudy of Scripture, ſometimes without it. Many of theſe when this ſpeculative Light of their own intellect by the aforeſaid means; either by the ſtudy of Scripture, or ſome way elſe begins to ſhine, they ſit down in it, abundantly ſatisfied; but all ſuch (queſtionleſs) are far enough from the top and higheſt degree of perfection: but if any one ſuch could be found, who had pierced and paſſed through the fore-mentioned attainment, and were totally and centrally mortifyed to it, and who had got above all ſorts of Images and Forms in the fancy; Such a one would infinitely be more dear and acceptable to God, then an hundred thouſand of the other ſort of men, who live in their own habitual inſtitutions, and modes, taken up by themſelves, out of ſelf-will, and inſenſible and intelectual Images, ſo totally taken up with them,

them, that they take no care to deny and mortifie themſelves. For indeed God is altogether hinder'd from entering into and poſſeſſing ſuch, by reaſon of their ſelf will, and their own proper working in their own ſtrength, by which they are detained in their own dearly beloved, and delighted in intellectual imaginations. But thoſe that have paſſed through ſuch, and by a kind of dying have reſigned up themſelves to God, and have gone out of all manner of imaginary comtemplations, and finally with humble reſignation, have offer'd and given up themſelves, free and naked, above all intellectual imaginations, (as St. *Dioniſius* ſaith, that the Light of Faith requires, that a man ſhould mount above the utmoſt power and capacity of reaſon, or intellect:) ſuch (I ſay) as have come to this ſtate, in them God finds a reſting place, where he may dwell and work all their works in them; when, where, and in what manner he pleaſeth: For when as God ſeeth in them no impediment, he works in them his own work, and doth act and lead them to himſelf, and in himſelf. Such men as theſe are unknown to any; becauſe there lives and converſations are hidden to all, unleſs thoſe that are of the ſame Attainment, State, or Complection, of which I fear there

there are very few. But to this heighth and perfection of Life, no man can attain, but by the profoundeſt and deepeſt humility, a perſpicuous and pure intellect, and a clear and illuminated reaſon. Although indeed (which cannot be denyed) once many intelligent Spirits which by Nature are nothing elſe but pure intelligences, fowlly erred, and fell from that eternal Unity, and were alſo forever ſecluded out of the Chorus of Angels; the ſame thing likewiſe happens every day to ſuch which look upon themſelves with ſelf-pleaſing flattery, and by uſurping ſelf-will, and a vain complacency in their own ſubtilty, make themſelves like thoſe fallen Angels. Wherefore (beloved) it concerns us to know, and to be able to diſtinguiſh, who are truly illuminated and wiſe Contemplators. Truely I have found ſo far as may be gathered from Scripture; four and twenty Particulars which a truly illuminated Man ought to have in him: which Particulars I ſhall willingly deliver at this time, and ſo conclude.

The Firſt Particular, even the chief Doctor of Doctors, and Teacher of all true Wiſdom and Knowledge; Chriſt Jeſus our Lord mentions, where he ſaith, *By this ſhall all men know that you are my Diſciples,* 1. *John* 13.

if you love one the other, and shall keep that my Commandement, which I commanded
John 15. *you, that you love one another even as I have loved you*; as if he should have said; although ye have all knowledge, and skill, all Mistery; if there be wanting Fidelity, and Charity, it profiteth nothing. For it is said of *Balaams*, that he was endowed with so piercing and subtile a wit, and reason, that he foresaw those things which God many hundred years afterward brought to pass, and manifested: but this profited him nothing, because as he ought he did not faithfully in love adhere to the truth known; Thus much shall suffice for the first point.

2 The Second Point is this; namely, That he be free from, and totally delivered from self; which notwithstanding will never seem so to him, but rather he will always think that he ought yet more and more to be divested of self, and to renounce all things.

3 The Third thing is, That he be deeply and thoroughly resign'd to God, in so much that God may not find in him the least impediment; but that he may work freely all his works in him, which perfection he will not rashly ascribe to himself, but will think himself of all men farthest off from it.

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The Fourth followeth, That he do totally 4
go out of, and deny himſelf, and all things elſe, in which he hath heretofore inordinately loved, ſought or intended himſelf, whether they have been things Temporal or things Eternal,

Fifthly, That he ſeek not his own or 5
himſelf in any meaſure; either in himſelf, or any Creature.

Sixtly, That he alwayes, and in all places 6
diligently attend, and obſerve what God requires of him, and what he would have him to do, and chearfully (relying upon Divine Grace) perform it; and ſatisfie Divine expectation; but not in the leaſt what ever, from thence arrogate to himſelf any thing.

Seventhly, That continually without intermiſſion he conform himſelf to Divine Will, ſo as that he will nothing elſe but what God willeth.

Eightly, That he would ſo ſtrongly and 8
powerfully work and excerciſe himſelf in God, and by and immence force, ſtrongeſt bands of love ſo bind and unite himſelf to him, that God may not as it were do any thing in himſelf without him, nor he likewiſe perform any thing without God.

Ninthly, That in all things which ſhall 9
happen to him, whether they be pleaſant or

bitter, yea in every work, in every performance, in every place, at all times, he enjoy sensibly Divine presence.

10 Tenthly, That he receive nothing at all whether it be grateful or grievous, as from the hands of any Creature; but all things nakedly and simply as from the hands of God. Whatever God shall do, or permit to be done by Creatures, he receive it no otherways then as from God himself.

11 The Eleventh point is this, That he never suffer himself to be in any measure overcome, or taken with a natural delight or savour of any Creature, without true and accountable necessity.

12 The Twelfth point is this, That neither he be to much depress or overwhelm'd, nor immoderatly vexed or inwardly grieved, with any whatever adversity which may happen to him from the truth, but alwayes constantly adhere to the truth.

13 The Thirteenth point, That he suffer not himself to be deceived by any false Light, or by any glistering shew of any Creatures; but chearfully and lovingly leave all things as he found them, making the best of every thing, and contending earnestly to be made the better by every thing, and by nothing to be made worse.

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The Fourteenth point, That he be always upon his guard, ſufficiently provided of, and armed with all ſorts of Vertues to reſiſt all Vices whatſoever, that ſo he may never be otherways then Conquerer, and in all conflicts bear away the Palm of Victory. 14

The Fifteenth point, That he nakedly endeavour to underſtand and contemplate (ſo far as God permits, and he be able) truth, as it is in it ſelf, and according to it lead his Life, and ſtudy to ſatisfie and anſwer the known truth in every thing. 15

The Sixteenth point, That he be perfect, juſt and upright, and that he eſteem himſelf nothing leſs than ſo. 16

The Seventeenth point, That he be ſparing in Words, yet full of inward Vigour and Life. 17

The Eighteenth point, That his Life be faithful, retired, humble, which by a good Example rather then Words may Preach to all, and Speak by doing. 18

The Nineteenth point, That he ſuffer himſelf willingly to be overcome by all which contend with him, and that in all things which belong to himſelf, but not in things which concern God. 19

20 The Twentieth point, That above all things he seek the Glory of God, and aime at, and intend nothing else in all his actions.

21 The Twenty first point, That he rejoyce not at all in any Priviledge, which he hath in any thing above others; but that he altogether himself is unworthy of the least.

22 The Twenty second point, That from his Heart he believe himself to be one of the most unprofitablest men in the World; yet nevertheless, let there be always found in him great Vigour, Faith, Hope and Charity; and let him not at all value his own Wisdom, nor all his works done by humane reason.

23 The Twenty third point, That in all his Words and Works he set before him as in a Glass, the Life and Doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that in them he continually contemplate himself, and as much as possible, renounce, cast away, and mortifie all whatsoever shall be found in him, unlike to the lovely Image of our Saviour.

24 The Twenty fourth and last point, That after all, he now as it were first begin, like a little Child as yet, to make proficiency in true profound deep and perfect humility, and think no other ways, than that he is now to begin

begin to implore Divine benignity, that it would find him out a way and afford assistance, whereby he may become a good man. And if he be esteemed so by some, or else for that cause he appear vile and base in the eyes of men; even that will be more grateful and acceptable to him, then if he should enjoy the favour and good-will of all.

But I fear my beloved, least I have been too tedious; Therefore these are the signs of a rational and purged ground, which the Splendour and beautiful Image of all truth doth enlighten and teach. Let every one therefore look within himself, and diligently search, whether he find within himself these twenty four Points, which if he do let him rejoyce; but if he do not, let him know that his understanding, though never so lofty and towering, nor all his subtile and witty works of his own reason, worth a rush; for he that is the Fountain & Pattern of all truth, can perform in him no supernatural work, unless he do prevent him by his singular and special grace, as we read he did to St. *Paul*. But this in my judgment happens very early in these our times. Finally, let the Eternal Truth our Lord God, grant that we may all be made by his grace, true Contemplators

in true and perfect humility, to his Praise and Glory. *Amen.*

It follows how the Layman *did in secret partly discover to the* Doctor *his hidden Sanctity, and how he convinced him that he was yet in the night of Ignorance, and that his Vessel was unclean, and that himself was of the number of the* Pharisees.

THE fore-written Sermon being ended, the Layman straight hastning to his Inne, there Writes it out word for word as it was delivered by the Doctor, comes with his Notes to the Doctor, and said thus to him; Reverend Sir, your Sermon I have writ out fair, and if it be not too troublesome I will repeat it out of my Paper.

Doctor, Truly I'le very willingly hear it: then the Layman read the whole Sermon, which being done, he spake thus to the Doctor.

Layman. I pray Sir tell me if I have omitted any of your Words, that I may write them.

Doctor. Believe it dear Son, you have exactly taken my Sermon word for word, as

I Preach'd it; and I'le assure you might I gain never so much I could not again write it so exactly and verbatim as you have done, unless I would take again the same pains which I did in the search of Scriptures; and I profess I cannot now sufficiently admire your happy wit and parts, and that you should so oft make your confession to me, and yet I never perceive till now. Then the Layman made as though he would take his leave of the Doctor, and said to him.

Layman. I entend (Sir) God willing to return home.

Doctor. Away, away, what is it that should compel you to retnrn home, whereas you have neither Wife nor Children to take care of; and what hinders, but that, sith you have no body at home, you may as well live here as there. I'le promise you shortly (God willing) I will Preach another Sermon of the utmost perfection of a Spiritual Life.

Layman. I'le assure you Sir I came not hither for the Sermons, but that I hoped by Gods Grace assisting, I should do some good.

Doctor. What good prethee Son did you think to do here; sith you are a simple Layman and ignorant of Scriptures, neither permitted

mitted to Preach? Pray ſtay here a while, and peradventure by Gods aſſiſtance I will give you ſuch a Sermon, as you will gladly hear.

Layman. There is ſomething Sir that I would willingly have ſpoke to you, but I doubt whether you can patiently bear it.

Doctor. Prethee Son ſpeak boldly what thou haſt to ſay; I truſt in God I ſhall patiently bear it, what ever it be.

Layman. Behold Reverend Sir, you gliſter in your Prieſtly dignity, & lately Preach a Sermon to us full fraught, with excellent precepts; but you take no care to hold them forth in your Life and Converſation, and even now how childiſhly did you ſay to me, ſtay here and I will Preach you another Sermon that ſhall pleaſe me. But take this for certain Sir, that neither your Sermons nor any Words whatever, which can in this Life be outwordly ſpoken, can be much profitable to me. Nay I'le aſſure you, the Sermons of men do oftner do me hurt, then profit me; becauſe that oftentimes various Images(or Imaginations)do inſinuate themſelves into me by reaſon of thoſe Sermons, which afterwards returning home, I can hardly with much and long labour again rid my ſelf of or forget; and (Sir) if you be re-

remembred, you had among others, this paſſage in your Sermon. That he ought to be free and clear from all Images (or Imaginations) to whom the chief Doctor and Teacher of Souls Chriſt Jeſus will vouchſafe to come; who I will aſſure you as oft as he is pleaſed to come to me, he teacheth me more in the ſpace of an hour, then either you (Maſter Doctor) or all the Doctors in the World, could teach me till Doomsday.

Doctor. Prethee, dear Son, for the Lords death ſake, ſtay with me here a longer time.

Layman. Truely (Mr. Doctor) you enforce me to ſtay by this deep adjuration, and if out of obedience to God, I do yield to ſtay here, it ſhall be upon this condition, that you promiſe me faithfully, that whatever hath paſt or ſhall paſs between us, you will keep ſecret under the privacy of confeſſion.

Doctor. That I will aſſure you (dear Son) I will willingly do, upon the condition, that you will ſtay longer with me. Then the Layman after this manner ſpake to the Doctor.

Layman. Mr. Doctor, in your late beforementioned Sermon, you deliivered indeed to

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us many excellent good things; yet whilſt you were ſpeaking, ſuch a ſimilitude as this came into my head, that me thought your good diſcourſes did no otherwayes proceed from you, then as if good and generous Wine were drawn through muddy dregs.

Doctor. Prethee (Son) what meaneſt thou by this ſimilitude.

Layman. Nothing elſe (Mr. Doctor) but me thought, your Veſſel was not clean, nor rinced from dreggs; and that's the reaſon that the Letter killeth you, and (alaſs) you dayly ſuffer it, yet dayly more and more to kill you; for (as you better know) the Scripture ſaith, the Letter killeth, but the Spirit quickeneth and maketh alive. Nevertheleſs the ſame Letter that now doth kill you, would (if you would) quickly quicken you. But truly at preſent for your condition it is this; You are yet in the Dark, and there is no Light in you, by which you might clearly and diſtinctly underſtand the Letter, and truely as yet you belong to the number of the Phariſees.

Doctor. I profeſs (dear Son) ſince the hour I was born, I never heard from any man ſuch hard language.

Layman. Very good (Mr. Doctor) I pray where is now your Sermon? See, ſee how

how you are catch'd! but beſides, though it may be my words may ſeem hard to you; yet intruth it is ſo as I have ſaid, as I ſhall eaſily prove even from your ſelf.

Doctor. Really I would willingly ſee that, for I cannot tell that ever I cared for that generation of Phariſees.

Layman. In the firſt place (Mr. Doctor) give me leave to ſhew you how it is that the Letter killeth you; you know (dear *Sir*) that as ſoon as ever you came to years of diſcretion, you betook your ſelf to the ſtudy of Books, in which notwithſtanding you did onely ſeek your ſelf, and are not at all even to this day free from that vice; but truely you are (though ſecretly) in your nature, proud, and do much relie upon that knowledge, and attribute much to that title of Doctor, wherewith you were honoured; neither have you in all theſe things purely with love and fervency of mind, ſought God onely; Neither out of love have you any Eye to his Glory in all your ſtudies, but do too too much love and ſeek your ſelf in the applauſe and favour of poor Creatures, and that eſpecially in one certain perſon, towards whom you would oft ſteal a look, and whom I fear you do inordinately love. And this is the reaſon why the Letter killeth you.

you. That alſo which I ſaid is too too true likewiſe; Namely, that you poſſeſs an empty and an unclean veſſel; For indeed you do not in all your actions purely and ſingly Love God, but in many things you too well know that you ſeek and love your ſelf. And therefore it is true that I ſaid, that your Veſſel is empty and foul with Lees; from whence it cometh to paſs, that that good and generous Wine of Heavenly Doctrine, and Divine word, although in its ſelf excellent and pure, yet paſſing through ſuch a Veſſel doth not at all reliſh to a purged mind, that heartily loves and bends towards God; neither doth it profit at all ſuch an one. That which I ſaid beſides; namely, that you did as yet ſit in midnight darkneſs, is alſo moſt true, which will evidently appear from hence, that you cannot ſay that any of the Sermons or inſtructions proceeded from a ſupernatural illumination or Divine Grace, but only from art and ſtudy. Laſtly, in that I did affirm you were a Phariſee, that alſo I prove to be no leſs true, although I will not ſay that you are altogether one of thoſe falſe Phariſees. But tell me (Reverend *Sir*) did not thoſe falſe Phariſees ſeek and love themſelves, not in all things, purely aiming at the Glory of God! And now pray conſider

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der your ſelf, whether you are not before God a Phariſee, and not a whit better. You do not (I ſuppoſe) doubt, that there are many living this day who in Gods eſteem are no better then Phariſees, yet are ſo more or leſs, according to the condition of their lives and converſations.

When as the Layman had ſaid theſe things, the Doctor affectually embracing him, kiſſed his Cheek and ſaid; you bring that paſſage into my mind which is not unlike to my caſe, and the ſame things ſeem to have happend unto me, which did to the woman of *Samaria* near the Well; for you have truely laid open and told me, all my moſt hidden, and ſecret miſcarriages; but eſpecially that, that I did ſometimes ſecretly caſt a glance at a certain Perſon, who yet notwithſtanding knows nothing her ſelf, ſith I never yet any way diſcovered to her that I loved her; Neither doth any man living, I am confident, ſuſpect any ſuch thing. And therefore I doubt not but this ſecret was revealed to you by God; wherefore I do moſt earneſtly entreat you for Chriſts paſſion ſake, that you would be now unto me a Spiritual Father, and accept of me a miſerable ſinner for your Son.

Layman. Believe it (Reverend Sir) if you perſiſt

perſiſt thus extravagantly to talk, I will ſtay no longer here, but ſpeedily return to my Country.

Doctor. Nay, but (Son) pray do not ſo, let me entreat you to ſtay a while with me, and I will faithfully promiſe you, that you ſhall have no ſuch Language for the future: And (believe it) I am fully determined to endeavour to amend my Life and take a new courſe, and to that end, do earneſtly deſire the furtherance of your good Counſel, and whatever it be that you ſhall adviſe me, that (by the Grace of God) I will endeavour to follow and effect.

Layman. Truely (Mr. Doctor) that is very neceſſary for you to do, for knowledge of the Letter, hath miſerably puft up and ſeduced very many learned men, ſome of them who were altogether falſe Phariſees, even to the eternal damnation of Hell; but others to a moſt grievous and horrible Purgatory. For (believe it) 'tis no ſmall matter for a Man to receive from God Almighty, ſo ſubtile a natural underſtanding, and ſo clear a reaſon, as by them to be able to underſtand clearly Divine Scripture; yet ſo to miſpend this pretious talent, as not to ſtudy thereby to ſhape and frame his Life and Converſation, according to the Scripture.

This

This enſuing Diſcourſe contains a Narration, what wonderful and ſtupendious things God did work by this Layman, *and alſo how for this cauſe beſides others, he obtained ſo great Grace and Favour, becauſe God found in him an abſolute reſigned up humility.*

Doct. GOod Son, let me deſire you to take the pains for God ſake, to ſhew me by what means you have attained to ſo perfect a life; how you began, what have been your exerciſes, and finally by what rules you have framed your life and converſation.

Layman. I'le aſſure you Mr. Doctor, your deſire is altogether a ſimple one; for certainly ſhould I take it upon me to rehearſe, or write all thoſe great things, which God Almighty within theſe ſeven years hath vouchſafed to work in me, a miſerable ſinner, I dare ſay you have not a Book of that Volumn as to be able to contain it all; nevertheleſs, I ſhall willingly tell you ſome things, which at this time are moſt fit for

you. In the firſt place, it was an exceeding mercy, that God did indulge unto me even this very thing; namely, that I were endowed with a true profound and moſt reſigned up humility: For my exerciſes it will not much concern you to know what they were, that I obſerved outwardly in my Body, ſith that the diſpoſitions, natures, and complexions, are ſo divers. But this is a ſure rule, that whoſoever doth from the bottom of his heart, humbly reſign up himſelf to God, him God will lead by inward temptations, and outward occurences into ſuch exerciſes, as he knows to be moſt profitable unto him, and ſuch as (if he will) he can beſt bear; for he that is inquiſitive to know from divers, what are their exerciſes, is wont for the moſt part to be deceived, and led away. For each man telling his proper exerciſes, when he would fain follow and imitate, no regard being had of his own ſtrength, it's no marvel if he be thereby deceived and lead away. For it oftentimes comes to paſs, that thoſe exerciſes which are very good for one, and exceedingly helpful, may to another, if he perſiſt in the uſing of them, be pernitious and deſtructive. And hence it is, that the Devil very oft is wont with falſe ſuggeſtions to perſwade men, whom he ſees to be of a

weak

weak nature and conſtitution, to take upon them the moſt ſtrict and rigid excerciſes. To this end, that either thereby they may ſhorten their dayes, or get an infirm and crazy brain; which thing that you may the better underſtand, I will tell you briefly what happened to me at the beginning of my converſion. I did peruſe as it happened at that time, a Book which in the German tongue, treats of the Lives of the Saints; and when I marked each of them, their auſteir and ſtrict manner of Life, I began thus to think with my ſelf; theſe were men in this World aſwell as thou, and peradventure did never ſo grievouſly offend God as thou haſt done. Hereupon I had a great mind to imitate each of theſe Saints in ſomething or other, with as ſevere and rigorous excerciſes. Whereby in a little time I contracted ſuch exceeding weakneſs, that I were even at the point of death. But one day above the reſt it happened, that about Sun-riſing, having beyond meaſure continued my exerciſe, that through exceeding weakneſs and wearineſs, even whilſt I were at my exerciſe, I fell faſt aſleep: my thought in my ſleep I heard a kind of voyce ſaying to me, Go to, ſelf-will'd man, if you kill your ſelf before your time, you ſhall certainly ſuffer for it moſt grievous

puniſhment. But if thou wilt ſuffer thy ſelf to be exerciſed by God, he will do it infinitely better then thou thy ſelf canſt do, by the counſel of the Devil. At theſe words, eſpecially at the naming of the Devil, ſuch a fear & terrour ſeized one me, that I ſuddenly waked out of ſleep, and riſing, began to think with my ſelf, that I had taken up the foreſaid exerciſes raſhly, and without advice; wherefore immediatly I hyed me to a Wood which was cloſe by the place where I then were. There I made my caſe known in order, to a certain old Hermite, and entreated him that he would give me his advice. The old man having heard me out, gave me this anſwer: If thou wouldſt have me give thee counſel, you muſt firſt tell me what the manner of your Life hath been, and what have been your exerciſes. I told him as I were bidden, all my ſtrict exerciſes, and how I had read over the Lives of the Saints, and how I had a great mind to imitate them. Then he asked me, by whoſe adviſe did I do thus; I confeſſed to him, that that which I had done, I had done by no mans advice but my own, and out of my own will. If ſo ſaid he, then take it for certain, it was the Devils counſel; and therefore you had need to take great heed that you follow him

no

no more, but reſign and give up your ſelf wholly to God, and he will exerciſe you far better, than either you or the Devil can: Therefore according to this old mans advice, I inſtantly gave over my exerciſes, and did with all my heart give up my ſelf wholly to God, and left my ſelf in his hands, to exerciſe me as he thought moſt fit. Truly (Mr. Doctor) I were by nature of an ingenuous temper, and of an excellent complexion, and of a ſubtil wit, even as I perceive you are; onely in this I was ſhort of you, that I had not ſtudied the Scriptures, nor skilled them, which I perceive you do; yet notwithſtanding I was naturally inclined, with ſo ſubtil and ſublime an underſtanding, that as oft as I thought fit to make uſe of it, I found my ſelf capable and apprehenſive of very great and high matters. Hereby once it came to paſs, that by reaſon of the ſubtilty of my underſtanding, I began to think thus with my ſelf; certainly thou art naturally endued with ſo happy a wit & towering underſtanding, that without all doubt, if thou wouldſt ſeriouſly & in enſly make uſe of it, thou wouldſt be apprehenſive of ſome extraordinary & divine matter, concerning even God himſelf. Which thoughts im-

mediatly after their suggestion, I perceived to be the fallacious Counsel, and pestilent Advice and Suggestion of the Devil: Thereupon I broke out into these words, *O mischievous and malignant Connsellour, What Advice is this that thou hast suggested to me?* Vetily, if we had such a God as could be apprehended by reason, I should not value him thus much. After this, one morning when I was ready to read morning Prayers, I had an exceeding vehement desire, insomuch that I brake forth in these words, and said to the Lord: O most merciful God, if it be thy blessed Will, make me now by experience to feel something, that may transcend and pass all understanding and reason. But I had no sooner ended these words, but that a vehement horrour possessed me, because that I should dare to desire so great a favour; and therefore again said unto the Lord, Ah Eternal and ever to be adored Majesty, pardon I beseech thee this my rashness, for it exceedingly repents me, to have done this: And how should it be O Lord, that so miserable an earth-worm as I am, and no man, should ever find such a thing to enter into his heart, as to dare to desire so transcendent

ſcendent and excelling favour and grace; when as I know ſufficiently, and am convinced within my ſelf how vile I am, to how many ſins I am prone, and how that through the whole courſe of my life, I never as I ought, loved my God, or regarded him, but have alwayes made my ſelf by reaſon of ſin, ſo odious in the eyes of thy glory, that I know very well, that I am unworthy that the earth ſhould bear me; and therefore ſince I have preſumed to ſuffer ſuch a deſire, of ſo tranſcendent grace to ariſe in me, it is abſolutely needful, that my body ſhould undergo direful, and ſuffer bitter things. Having thus ſaid, I ſtrip'd my ſelf, neither did I ceaſe to ſtrike my ſelf with hard ſtripes, till the blood ran about my ſhoulders. And ſo it came to paſs, that whileſt I was revolving ſuch like thoughts in my heart, and ſpake ſuch like words even till Sun-riſing, upon a ſudden an exceeding ſhining light filled my whole Cell, and in that light I fell into an extaſie; ſo that for a time I was deprived both of my Reaſon and Senſes. But Oh! that hour ſeemed extreamly ſhort unto me. And after I came to my ſelf, I found ſo exceeding and ſupernatural im-

preſſion & ſeal of truth upon me, that I had good reaſon to ſay with St. *Peter* the Apoſtle, *Lord, it is good for us to be here.* For (believe it) in that ſhort hour I did receive more truth, with more clear light, and certain evidence; more truth (I ſay) than what either you, Mr. Doctor, or all the Doctors in the world can teach me, even till Dooms-day. But (Mr. Doctor) I ſuppoſe I have ſpoken enough already, as much as concerns your preſent ſtate and condition.

This

This following Diſcourſe, ſhows how the Lord was pleaſed to Convert by the means of this Layman, *a certain* Pagan *that lived in a far Country. It ſhews likewiſe how the Holy Ghoſt even at this day doth pour forth the ſame Virtue and Grace, upon minds that he finds apt and well prepared to receive it, that he did upon the* Apoſtles *at the day of* Penticoſt: *As alſo it ſheweth, how this* Layman *did at large explain theſe things to the* Doctor; *and how by plain and clear Reaſons he proved the* Doctor *to be a* Phariſee, *and at laſt brought him to this, that he reſolved fully with himſelf to take a new courſe, and amend his life.*

Doctor.

DEar Son, if thou haſt any thing more to ſay, I would willingly hear it; for truly I have been much taken with thoſe things which you have hitherto diſcourſed of. But above all, I intreat you again that you will ſtay with me, and by no means yet leave

leave me. If you want money to defray your charges, I will willingly ſupply your want, though I do pawn my Books to take up money: only I deſire you by all means to ſtay with me.

Layman. Reverend Sir, I pray God reward you for your proffer'd Courteſie toward me. But I would have you know this, that I ſtand not in need either of yours, or any other mans Temporal goods, for God Almighty hath made me his Steward, and I have neer five thouſand Crowns which are Gods, and I would willingly ſpend them all whereſoever it ſhall be neceſſary, or where ever God requireth them at my hands.

Doctor. I perceive then, if ſo, that you are Steward of a very rich and munificent Lord: But I cannot ſufficiently admire at what you even now ſpake: That neither I nor all the Doctors in the World, are able to teach you ſo much, even between this and Doomſ-day, as you have in one hour learned of God. Let me ask you this Queſtion, Did ſacred Scripture proceed and flow from the Holy Ghoſt?

Layman. Yes, they did without all doubt, and ſo the Catholick Faith teacheth us to believe. But Mr. Doctor, it grieveth

grieveth me that I have ſaid ſo great things unto you, and that you notwithſtanding ſhould talk ſo childiſhly. But ſee you, I will propound one Queſtion to you, and if you can by Scripture or without it reſolve me, I promiſe you I will give you on Gods behalf a thouſand Crowns.

Doctor. Prethee good Son tell me what Queſtion is that.

Layman. I would know of you (Mr. Doctor) whether you can inſtruct me how I may write a Letter in ſuch a Language, to a certain Pagan living in a far remote Country, that he may be able both to read it, and underſtand it? and how the form and manner of the Letter may be ſuch, that the ſame Pagan by the reading of it, may be converted to the Faith?

Doctor. Truly (Son) I know not what to ſay to this; for ſuch kind of works as theſe, are even the works of the Holy Ghoſt. But I beſeech you tell me whether any ſuch thing ever happened unto you, and if you did thereby underſtand by what means this may be done? or whether you your ſelf were not he that did it?

Layman. No Mr. Doctor, it was not I that did it, but the Holy Ghoſt was pleaſed to work ſo by me an unworthy Inſtrument.

And

And truly much may be said touching this matter, but it were too tedious to rehearse all; for if this whole business should be written, it would even fill a Volumn. But I shall tell you a few passages, from whence you may collect the whole matter. There was a certain Pagan, a true hearted honest man, and in his way very just. This man for a long time together did cry unto Heaven, and daily did call upon him, who created both him & all Creatures, and did daily pray after this manner. *O God, thou Eternal Creator of all things, behold I am born and bred up in this Country, and in the Faith of it. But I perceive the Jews have another Belief, and likewise the Christians follow another Faith: do thou therefore O Lord, who art over all, and hast made all things, shew unto me I beseech thee by what ever means it pleaseth thee, whether there be any other Faith better or truer than this in which I have been born and bred, that I may believe it; and I will willingly and readily obey thee, by taking upon me that Belief. But if thou shalt refuse to signifie thus much unto me, and it shall happen that I die in this Faith because I know no better, surely this will be hard measure.* After the Pagan had thus prayed, it came to

pass

paſs that a Letter was written unto him from me; which when he had read he was converted unto the Chriſtian Faith. He likewiſe did write back again a Letter to me, in which he fully ſhewed how it happened unto him; which Letter I will aſſure you was ſo written in our vulgar High Dutch, as I could very well read it. Many things (Mr. Doctor) remains to be ſpoken concerning this matter, but you have in brief the ſum of it.

Doctor. Truly God is wonderful in his gifts, and I will aſſure you (dear Son) theſe are ſtrange and rare matters which you have told me.

Layman. Verily I do enough fear (Mr. Doctor) that I have told you more than was fit for me to tell you. And to ſay the truth, I do perceive that I have ſpoken ſomewhat that doth ſomething trouble you, and go againſt your ſtomack. For whereas I am but a Layman, and illiterate, but you a great Dr. of ſacred Divinitie; nevertheleſs I have taken upon me by way of tutoring and teaching, to tell you ſo many things; it cannot be but this muſt ſomewhat offend you.

Doctor. Son, if you would not take it ill, I would tell you what doth diſpleaſe me.

Layman.

Layman. Aſſuredly I will not take it ill, you may ſpeak all your mind freely.

Doctor. Dear Son, I cannot away with this, but do what I can it goes againſt my ſtomack, that you when as you are a Layman, ſhould teach me a Doctor and a Divine; as alſo that you ſhould call me a Phariſee.

Layman. Is there any thing more in me that doth diſpleaſe you?

Doctor. Not the leaſt I aſſure you, that I know of.

Layman. Will you give me leave patiently (Mr. Doctor) to ſatisfie you in theſe two things.

Doctor. Dear Son, you have not only free leave, but I again and again deſire you to do it

Layman. Pray tell me (Mr. Doctor) how it ſhould come to paſs, and by whom was it brought about, that the moſt bleſſed Virgin *Katherine*, when ſhe was about fourſcore years of age, ſhould in diſcourſe and diſpute overcome fifty moſt acute Philoſophers, ſo as they did all moſt willingly offer themſelves to die for Chriſt? Tell me I ſay (Mr. Doctor) who was that that did this, or who ſpake there? That one tender Virgin ſhould overcome ſo great Philoſophers.

Doctor.

Doctor. No man doubts but that it was the Holy Ghoſt who did that.

Layman. Do you not believe (Mr. Doctor) that the Holy Ghoſt, is as powerful now as he was then ?

Doctor. Yes I do certainly believe it.

Layman. And what hinders then, but that you may alſo believe, that the ſame Holy Ghoſt can ſpeak to you by me a miſerable ſinner, when as he once deigned to ſpeak by *Caiphas* who alſo was a ſinner. And truly if you ſo hardly bear thoſe things which I have ſpoken, hereafter I ſhall diſcourſe with you more cautiouſly.

Doctor. I entreat you (Son) do no ſo, for I will now correct my ſelf in this matter alſo.

Layman. You ſaid moreover (Sir) that this alſo did ſomwhat gall you, that I ſhould call you a Phariſee : But when I ſaid ſo there was then ſuch an account given of it by me to you, that ought fully to have ſatisfied you. But ſith you were not content with that, I ſhall again with another Reaſon prove to you, that you are more guilty in that point than I then ſaid. Surely you know (Mr. Doctor) that our Saviour doth exhort us in one place, and ſpeaks in this manner ; *Beware of the* Phariſees, *for they bind hea-*

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vy burthens and grievous to be born, and lay them upon mens ſhoulders, but they will not touch them with one of their little fingers. Now conſider and reflect upon your ſelf a little: Certainly you did lay upon our ſhoulders Twenty four Points, or Articles, which you your ſelf will hardly lightly touch. Likewiſe in another place, our Saviour ſpeaks of the ſelf ſame *Phariſees*, *All whatſoever they ſay unto you, that keep and do, but do not after their works, for they ſay and do not.*

Doctor. Thoſe words indeed the Lord ſpake once.

Layman. That's no matter, for he ſpeaks the ſame yet continually. But ſee now (Sir) whether you have not given us moſt excellent Rules and Precepts, which notwithſtanding how much you follow in your Life and Converſation, God knows, and you alſo are not ignorant; and as things ſtand with you at preſent, I do willingly follow your Doctrine, but ſhould be very loath to imitate your Life and Converſation: wherefore now I pray judge you your ſelf, whether before God you are not truly a Phariſee; yet not of the number of thoſe falſe and impious Phariſees that deſerve Hell.

Doctor. Truly (Son) I have not what

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to anſwer, but confeſs and acknowledge my ſelf to be a ſinner. And now I determine to amend my life, though I ſhould hereby incur the hazard of death. Neither can I any longer defer it, but do again and again entreat and beſeech you (Son) that purely for Gods ſake you would Counſel me, how I may begin a better life, and that you would alſo ſhew me by what means I may attain the higheſt perfection, which in this life may be attained.

Layman. It is very hard (good Sir) let it be ſpoken under favour, to give you any Counſel in this matter; for your life and manner of converſation which you have hetherto led, and been uſed to, you have by long cuſtom turned almoſt into another nature. So that if you ſhould deny and ceaſe from your long accuſtomed manner and courſe of life, (which of neceſſity you muſt do) it could not be, without grievous trouble and anguiſh to your nature; eſpecially ſith you are (if I miſtake not) about 50 years of age.

Doctor. Thereabout indeed (dear Son) I think is my age; But what then? they that came at the eleventh hour had their full wages, and received their penny. And therefore now I am fully reſolved and pur-

pos'd in mind (though I were certain thereby to suffer death) from hence forward to turn over a new leaf, to change my course, and to renounce, deny and forsake my old fallacious life (that was onely given to speculation and curiosities of wit) and also to deny all vice, and all manner of sensuality; and endeavour by the grace of God, to order my life for the future after your Advice and Counsel. Wherefore I most earnestly entreat, that laying aside all delay, you would instruct and teach me for Gods sake, how I may begin the reformation and amendment of my life; for I cannot endure it should any longer be deferred or delayed.

Layman. Well (honoured Sir) sith there is such grace conferred upon you by God, that you refuse not to humble your self, but are willing to submit your self to a vile poor creature. It concerns us in the first place to give God the honour, due to him. And sith it must be, that I for Gods sake am to give Counsel and Advice to you, I shall humbly seek Gods help; and that I may be the better able, I shall do it from his love, and for the love of him. In the first place, truly I shall begin to teach you after the same manner as they instruct

Children

Children at School; that is, I shall commend to you a certain spiritual Alphabet, consisting of 23 Articles or Sentences, so many as there are letters in the Alphabet, with which they begin to teach Children.

Here followeth a Golden Alphabet, delivered by the Layman *to the* Doctor, *that by it he might begin to mend his life. Frequently to read which, and according to lead our lives, without doubt would be exceeding profitable to us All.*

A Golden Alphabet.

ATtempt in the first place, and set upon a good, pure, and spiritual life, not triflingly or childishly, but stoutly, and with a resolved manly mind. A

Both do good, and shun evil, and that carefully and diligently. B

Conserve, and keep the most congruous and modest mean in all things. C

Diligently learn to bear about with you, both inwardly and outwardly, modesty and humility. D

Extirpate and utterly deny for Gods sake your own will, that so you may remain in union with God. E

F Fervently, constantly, and seriously persevere in God.

G Give your self with joy, simply and studiously to obey, and shew thy self willing and ready without murmuring to all, whatever is of God.

H Hanker not after, nor look back upon the world.

I Inwardly accustom thy self to ruminate and meditate in thy heart, upon divine and spiritual matters, and with tears bewail and deplore thy former life.

K Keep constant guard, and couragiously resist the temptations of the Devil, the World, and the Flesh.

L Leaving behind all temporal things, contend with a cheerful and valiant mind after Eternal.

M Mind alwayes to preserve a love to God and your Neighbour.

N Never covet any mans goods, of what nature soever they be.

O Orderly make the best of all things, and never turn any thing to the worst.

P Punishment, and remorse for sin, from whence soever it happen to you, whether from God or from Creatures, take it kindly, and receive it with a submissive mind.

Q Quietly and heartily forgive all, what eve

ever they be, that have offended you, or done you any injury, in thought, word or deed.

Retain with all poſſible diligence, thy chaſtity, both of Body and Soul. R

Seriouſly obſerve meekneſs and mildneſs in all things, and ſtudy to be made better by all things. S

Take heed that without guile, hypocriſie or fraud, you keep your Word, and obſerve Faith with all men; and exerciſe your ſelf in works of charity, both bodily and ſpiritual, according to your ability. T

Vigilantly take heed, neither in eating or in drinking, or any other matter you exceed due meaſure. V

XTS Life and Doctrine revolve always in your mind, and to the utmoſt of your power imitate it, and lead your life according to it. X

Ymportune the undefiled Virgin-mother with devout Prayers, that ſhe may be aſſiſting to you in the through learning this my Inſtitution. Y

Zealouſly accuſtom your ſelf with ſevere Diſcipline, to keep under and bridle your will, and ſenſual affections; that they mildly yield to what ever God ſhall do with you, or ſuffer to happen to you. Z

How the Doctor *soon, though not without labour, truly learn'd the Alphabetical Institution: How afterward the* Layman *taught him a nearer way to perfection. Moreover, how the* Doctor *was fain to enter upon a dying Life; and therein so long exercised himself, until he had overcome himself.*

Layman. GO to now (Mr. Doctor) receive this childish Institution from God, who delivereth the same unto you by me an unworthy sinner.

Doctor. To you peradventure (dear Son) this Institution seems but childish; but I confess to you, me thinks, it is sufficiently man-like: but be it what it will be, I am resolved by the grace of God to take upon me the learning of it. But pray tell me, what time will you set me to learn it in.

Layman. For the honour of Christs five wounds, which are the signs of his immeasurable love to us, take five weeks, that so you may the more perfectly learn it. In which time you must be your own School-master,

master, and enjoyn your self sharp pennance, if you mistake and happen to fail in any of these Articles, or to do any thing contrary to them. 1. Whip your naked shoulders with Rods.

Doctor. I'le follow your Counsel (Son) and undergo all your Injunctions.

Now when 3 weeks were near spent in this manner of living, the Layman enquired of the Doctor, how it was with him. To whom the Doctor answered, I will assure you dear Son, I have in these three weeks undergone more and sharper pennance in the learning of this your Institution, than in all the studies of my whole life past.

Layman. But how is it with you now (Mr. Doctor) are you skilful in the Articles and Letters of the Alphabet as yet?

Doctor. How much soever I be Master of it (and by the grace of God, things go well enough with me) yet I would willingly more perfectly skill it. But moreover, I beseech you instruct me further, and shew me yet more perfect things.

Layman. You very well know Sir, that in Schools they never set boyes higher Lessons, till they have well learned their first Elements.

Doctor. I cónfess, then (dear Son) I

should be guilty of a lye, if I should say, I have throughly learned your Alphabet.

Layman. Therefore it is more advised for us to proceed no further, till you have perfectly learned it.

Afterward, when again about 3 weeks more were spent, the Doctor sent a friend to the Layman, to desire him to step to him, who accordingly presently came; and the Doctor said to him, *O Son rejoice with me, for I suppose now through the grace of God, I am pretty perfect in the Alphabet*; and if you please, I will willingly give you an account of it.

Layman. There is no need Sir, that you should so do; for I doubt not of the truth of what you say; and do much congratulate you.

Master. Truly Son, with much difficulty have I learned this Institution; but now I beseech you farther to instruct me.

Layman. Take it for certain Mr. Doctor, that of my self I cannot farther instruct you, but if it please Almighty God farther by me to instruct you, I hope I shall not be backward to do my best endeavour, and will be a willing, although an unworthy instrument of his, by whom he may do what

what he pleaſe; neither ſhall I in the leaſt advice you to any thing, but what he ſhall give in, and ſupply me with, & this I will do ſingly, & of the pure love of God, & deſire of your Salvation. And if it ſhall happen unto you, as it did to the young man in the Goſpel, who when he heard the Counſel of our Lord, to ſell and leave all that he had, went away ſorrowful; if (I ſay) it ſhall ſo fall out with you, I for my part will be ſolely blameleſs.

Doctor. Let not that (Son) at all trouble you, for I am fully reſolved in my mind, not to regard at all what can in this matter befall me; but purpoſe to follow and obey Gods and your Counſel.

Layman. Well (Sir) ſith you now are of ſo reſolved and ready a mind: I do in the firſt place out of charity and the love of God adviſe you, that by all means you remain obedient to your Order, and to all your Superiours; For it cannot be but that if you enter upon the right, ſtraight and narrow way, you will be grievouſly oppreſſed and vexed; and that chiefly by your Order and Brethren. And when this ſhall befall you, ſtraight-ways your ſubtile underſtanding, and ſenſual nature, will be deviſing many things, and urging you to go to the chief Biſhop,

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or ſome whither, and find a thouſand ways whereby to avoid this Croſs. But herein you muſt take great heed, and rather bear patiently what ever ſhall happen grievous unto you, and continually perſevere in humble obedience; for truly the ſame way that our Lord ſhewed unto the fore-named young man, that way muſt you go, you muſt take up your Croſs upon your ſhoulders, and follow the Lord and Saviour, and in ſome meaſure his example, and that with true, great, and patient humility: Furthermore you muſt renounce and deny that acute, ſubtile and pompous underſtanding, which you have acquired out of the Scriptures. And for a while give over all reading, ſtudying and preaching. And when thoſe that uſed to make their confeſſions to you, ſhall come again unto you to that end, you muſt ſhew your ſelf in ſimplicity; and confeſſion being made, immediatly withdraw from them, ſpeaking nothing, nor giving them any counſel, but only ſaying, I will firſt learn how I may counſel my ſelf, and when I have well learned ſo to do, I will be ready to inpart advice to you. And if they be inquiſitive when you will preach, you may without injury to the truth, ſimply and nakedly anſwer, that at the preſent you are

are wholly taken up with another buſineſs. So by this means you will by little and little, alienate and eſtrange your ſelf from men.

Doctor. If preaching be forbid me, there is nothing then (Son) that I have to employ my ſelf in: what therefore ſhall I do?

Layman. Betake your ſelf to your Cell, and there perform your hourly Prayers, and as oft as you can, do the ſame, in Quire with others. Likewiſe every day, except ſome juſt occaſion hinder you perform Divine ſervice, and celebrate the Maſs. Afterward, what ever time remains, you ſhall ſpend it in meditating of the Life, Death, and Paſſion, and example of Chriſt; diligently conſidering how unlike your Life is to His. Here call to mind, and in the bitterneſs of *Iſa. 32.* your Soul, think of the years, and all the time paſt, in which you have ſinfully loved your ſelf, taking notice how little your love hath been to God: and contrary-wiſe, how great his love hath been to you. Of theſe things Sir, let your ſtudy humbly be, for hereby it may ſo come to paſs, that by degrees you may attain to true humility, and change your old converſation, and antient Cuſtome into a better. Furthermore, when that time ſhall come, which God well knows; he will on a ſudden change you into a new, and another

another man. But before this regeneration can be wrought in you, you must first sell all whatever you possess, and humbly resign all unto God; Namely, you ought wholly to renounce and deny, all your curiosity and subtility of your sences, and understanding; and whatever it be, by which you may acquire honour or delight to your self; and lastly, all that delight, which hitherto you have possest in your nature, and in which according to your nature, you have falsly, and inordinately found rest; and with blessed
Luk. 7. 10 *Mary Magdalen* humbly cast your self prostrate at the Feet of your Lord. For indeed you must totally dye to all these things forementioned. Now if you shall begin to set upon these things, you will render your self a pleasant, and acceptable spectacle to Almighty God: who indeed cannot behold these things without delight: and it is probable, he will not leave, but will drive and compel you to such tryals as were of old, that you may so much the more be proved, and be throughly purified as gold in a furnace; It may be (I say) he will reach out to you in some measure that cup of love, which he gave to his only begotten Son: which is, that it may so fall out, that whatever you do or leave undone, yea, and your whole

whole courſe of life may be diſeſteemed, and deſpiſed of all: and thoſe, who have hitherto been wont to confeſs themſelves to you, may ſtand a far off from you, as one deſtitute of ſenſe and reaſon: yes, and all your friends, and a great part of your Brethren, that live with you in your Monaſtery, may be offended and ſcandalized at your life, and may ſay one to the other, that you have taken up a ſtrange and unuſual way of life, ſuch as hath almoſt rendred you a dolt, or fool. Wherefore when as theſe things ſhall happen unto you, ſee Sir that by no means you be terrified, but rather triumph in your God, becauſe your Salvation is nigh. Notwithſtanding your frail nature (without doubt) will be ſomething terrified at this; but do you ſtoutly truſt in God, who will by no means forſake you. Furthermore, when you ſhall be brought into this diſtreſs, it can hardly be, but that at ſometime or other, it will come into your mind, to ask and deſire of God, that he would vouchſafe unto you ſome ſupernatural conſolation, and make you to taſte ſome ſweetneſs; which when it ſhall happen to you, be ſure ſuch a deſire is not from God; but from hence rather, that as yet, there is ſome pride lurking in your nature. For truly, it is great preſumption for

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any to be so bold, as to ask of God such supernatural Gifts. And therefore if this should befall you, that you should perceive any such desire to arise in you; instantly set your self against it with your whole strength, and supress it with very great and humble resignation, saying both with heart and voice; *Ah most Merciful God, it doth extreamly, and from the bottom of my heart grieve and displease me, and I very much lament, because I perceive so great and high a desire to arise in me; when as I clearly perceive I am altogether unworthy of such great gifts; yea, and unworthy that the Earth should bear me.* And when you shall utter these words with your mouth, although as yet you be not so perfectly sensible in your heart; be not much terrified: but only as oft as such like desires shall arise in you, you must punish your self with Rods. But if neither by such means, such thoughts will cease, then endure them as a temptation, so long as God pleaseth, you should bear them. Finally (worthy Sir) if you resolve to undergo this course of life; you will perceive nothing more profitable to you, then that with a profound and couragious resignation, you humbly commit your self to God in all things, which shall happen to you, whether

whether they be ſweet, or whether they be bitter, whether they delight, or whether they torment; ſo as that you may be able truly to ſay unto God; *O moſt Merciful God, and moſt worthy to be adored, although it were thy Will, that I ſhould remain in this life, and in this heavy preſſure even till the laſt day of Judgment; yet I would by no means forſake thee, but conſtantly and ever adhere, and cleave to thee.* Verily Sir, I ſufficiently in the Grace of God underſtand, that this thought now is in your heart, that you may juſtly inwardly ſay to your ſelf, that what ever hath hitherto been ſpoken by me, is extream hard and difficult. And therefore I before made this proteſtation, If it ſhall happen that you ſtart aſide from what is propoſed to you, (as did that Young man fore-mentioned) then I will be free from all blame.

Maſter. It is (dear Son) very true, which you ſay; and moreover this your laſt ſpeech ſeems to me yet more hard.

Layman. And yet Sir, you intreated me, to ſhew you the neareſt way to the higheſt perfection attainable in this life. And truly, I know no way more ſecure, then that, which leads to the imitation of the example of the moſt Holy Humanity of Chriſt. Wherefore

Wherefore I sincerely advice you, to take sufficient time of consideration, and betake your self into your self; and whatever by Divine inspiration you shall understand, ought to be done by you, that, you may safely set upon.

Master. I like well (Son) your counsel, and intend to follow it: and as I shall be able, I will take heed by the assistance of Divine Grace to overcome my self.

What afterwards befel the Doctor.

How he endured grievous pressures in his nature, and underwent the contempt of men, insomuch that his strength began to fail him.

ABout eight dayes after, the Doctor sent a certain Messenger to the Layick, to desire him to come to him; And when he was come, the Master said to him: Ah most dear son, it can hardly be uttered, what fightings, what grief, what strife, and contention, I have inwardly undergone both night and day, before with Gods assistance, I could so far attain, as that I might overcome the Devil, the Flesh, and my own Nature. But now through the Grace of God

God I have obtained an undanted, and ready mind, and alſo a true and perfect will; ſo that I will chearfully (God aſſiſting) enter upon that way, which you have taught me: and although (likely) it will be very troubleſome to my Nature, yet that ought patiently to be endured, neither ſhall I for that cauſe draw back, but will through the Grace of God perſevere ſteady and conſtant in this purpoſed courſe.

Layman. Do you keep ſtill in your memory (Doctor) thoſe Words which I lately ſpake to you?

Maſter. Immediately after you left me, I carefully wrote them all down.

Layman. I congratulate to you Sir, & heartily rejoyce with you, that you have obtained ſo ready, ſo vigorous, and ſo undanted a mind; neither do I in this leſs wiſh well to you, than I do to my ſelf. Therefore now ſafely in the Name of God begin, and behave your ſelf manlike. And ſo taking his leave, the Layick departed.

Now the Doctor obeying the inſtructions, and counſel of the Layick, preſently ſet upon the work: And forthwith forbore every thing, that he was required to forbear. In ſo much, that before a year was come about, he was as much had in con-

tempt by all, that lived with him in the Monaſtery, as he was before had in eſteem, and honour; yea, and his ſpecial friends, and as many (whether men or women) as were wont to confeſs themſelves to him; finally, all that knew him, and reſpected him, became ſo eſtranged from him, as if they had never ſeen him: which was not a little troubleſome and contrary to his nature. Moreover, he began to feel much infirmity and weakneſs in his head, which ſtruck him with greater terrour, than all the reſt. Wherefore by a Meſſenger he ſent for the Layman, and declared to him, all that had befallen him, and how that his natural ſtrength began to fail: but chiefly how he was not a little diſtreſſed, by reaſon of the infirmity of his head. The Layman made him this anſwer. Be not terrified Sir, but humbly reſign your ſelf to God, and put your truſt firmly in him. Truely, I hitherto well am pleaſed, and like matters, as they ſtand with you; and indeed things are very well with you, and will be better without doubt; you well know, that he that will find the right Way, and walk therein, muſt through ſome ſufferings at leaſt, and afflictions, follow the example of Truth it ſelf; namely, our Saviour Chriſt.

There-

Therefore in the leaſt be not terrified at all, but leave your ſelf totally to God; for it thus heretofore befel me likewiſe. Notwithſtanding in the mean time, whileſt this infirmity is upon you, you may diſcretly ſuccour your Nature, by the uſe of better meat. I had made for me, when I were in the like infirmity, a certain confection of Aromatical druggs, which did comfort my head; and the like I'le get made for you. But this is certain, that I alwayes left my ſelf totally to God, to do with my Soul or Body what he pleaſed.

Maſter. But now you teach me otherwayes, & adviſe me to relieve & ſuccour my ſelf with better meat, in this my infirmity.

Layman. No man ought Sir to tempt God; ſo long as you continue in this weakneſs, God doth freely permit you to help and comfort your nature, & eſpecially your head. Go to now Sir, & with Divine aſſiſtance go on as you have begun; joyfully reſign up your ſelf to God in all things, with true & deep humility. Put your truſt in God, and wait for his grace, and whatever he then requires of you, whether it be ſweet, or whether it be bitter, be ſure to the utmoſt of your ſtrength to yield him obedience. As for my part, I pray you for Gods ſake, take it not ill,

that I can no longer at this time abide with you. For a weighty busines, compels me at this time to bid you fare-well. But if you cannot spare me altogether, send some body to that place, and there I'le be found. But it would be far better for you if you could go on without the comfort of any mortal creature.

Master. Do not (I beseech you dear Son) say so; for indeed I cannot long want you. And truly it afflicts me much, and fills my mind with vehement anguish, because you now will depart from me. But sith, as you say so weighty a business, and which concerns God, compels you to be gone; I will content, and resign my self, and bear your absence as well as I may.

Layman. Now therefore Sir, sith you are brought under the Rod, and scourge of the Lord, to which also you have offered your self willingly, it concerns you very much to lead your life discretly. Be careful therefore to give your self your just due. And let it not disturb you, that you are forsaken by Creatures. But if you should want money, pawn some of your Books, and borrow upon them; but take heed that you sell not one of them. For if I be not mistaken, the time will come, when they will

will be all neceſſary to you. Having thus ſaid, the Layman bidding the Doctor fare-well, departed; the Doctor in the mean time weeping for his departure, and commending himſelf to God.

How the Doctor *was wonderfully viſited, touched, and illuminated by God: and how the* Layman *returned to him again, and meekly exorted him, that he ſhould again take upon him the care of Preaching, which for ſome time had been omitted.*

WHen as now the Doctor had for 2. years together continued in moſt grievous temptations, together with the great contempt of all his Friends, and extream poverty, inſomuch that he was compelled to borrow money, upon ſome of his Books, which he pawned; and alſo had undergone with much humility the grievous weakneſs of his whole nature: It came to paſs that night, which immediately goes before the day celebrated for the Converſion of St. *Paul*, that a moſt grievous Temptation ruſhed upon him, ſuch as the heart of man cannot

imagine, whereby he conceived such a great weakness of his whole nature, that that night he was not able to go forth to Morning-Prayer, but abode sitting in his Cell, resigning himself from the bottom of his heart to God, with huge and true humility, being destitute of all help and comfort from any mortal Creature whatever. And whilest he was kept in this weakness, he began amongst other things to meditate on the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, thinking with himself, with what infinite love Jesus Christ did follow him; and contrariwise, he reflecting upon his own life, perceiving how unconsiderable his life was, if compared with the Life of Christ, and how as nothing his life was, compared with the immence charity of Christ. Great contrition, and sorrow for all his sins, and for all his ill spent and lost time, ceazed upon him. So that with his whole affection, with heart and voice he said to the Lord: *Ah! merciful and compassionate Lord God, have mercy, have mercy upon me for the abiss of thy mercies sake, because I am not worthy that the earth should bear me.* Whilest these words were in his heart and mouth, being broad awake, he heard with his bodily ears (yet seeing nothing) a voice saying unto

unto him. *Now receive thy peace, and put thy truſt in God; and take it for certain, that when he lived upon earth, that whatſoever ſick perſon he cured in body, the ſame he likewiſe healed in Soul.* Which words being ended, inſtantly the Doctor fell into an extaſie, and was deprived of all rational underſtanding, inſomuch that he knew not what was done unto him, where he was, or whither he was ſnatch'd. But after that he was reſtored to himſelf, he found in himſelf in his whole nature, a new and great power, and vigour; ſuch as he confeſſed he had never in all his whole life time felt by experience before; as alſo ſo clear and enlightned a diſcerning, or illuminated reaſon, as never was in the leaſt known to him before that time. But being amazed, he wondred with himſelf, from whence theſe things ſhould ſo ſuddenly happen unto him, and began to think thus with himſelf. Certainly thou wilt never be able to clear up this matter of thy ſelf, ſend therefore for thy Friend to come unto thee, and lay open the whole matter in order unto him. And ſo he did. The Layman being ſent for, readily obeyed the Doctor, came to him forthwith; the Doctor told him every thing in order, as it happened unto him; which

when the Layman had heard, he said. How gladly, even with my whole heart Sir, do I hear this news. I know that you have first now truly experienced the true grace of God, and are now first touched in the superior powers of your mind. Know also, that as heretofore the Letter killed you, so now the same will quicken you, because all the holy Scripture proceeded and flowed from the holy Ghost. Neither doubt Sir, but the knowledge of the holy Scripture will for the future very much profit you now that you have been found worthy to be illuminated by the light of the holy Ghost. For many things now will be made manifest to you by the Scriptures, which were altogether unknown to you before. For you know, that the holy Scripture seemed to you, and many other Theologists to be contrary to it self in many places. But he who rightly knows how to look into it, in the light of the holy Spirit (as you hence-forward will be able to do) such a one doth plainly know, how that it agreeth with it self throughout. Wherefore now you will begin wisely to understand Scripture, and rightly to follow the true Pattern and Exempler of Truth, our Lord Jesus Christ. Now also you must again take upon you the care of Preaching,

Preaching, which for ſome time hath been intermitted; that by the Word you may edifie and inſtruct your Neighbours. And now the time is come alſo, that you muſt fetch home your Books again, and fall to reading, and peruſing them. And be certain, that hereafter one Sermon of yours will be more profitable and fruitful, than a hundred of your former; for thoſe that ſhall hear you hereafter, will be profited and amended far more, than they have been heretofore; and that, becauſe the Word which you ſhall hereafter utter, will flow from a clean veſſel, and therefore will be very grateful and acceptable to a clean mind, and a lover of God. Furthermore, know this, that as heretofore you have been by many accounted contemptible, and appeared to them diſpicable; ſo now you will appear to them all, an hundred times more amiable, and be more acceptable than ever heretofore. And now multitudes of people will begin to flock together to hear you; ſo that it will for this cauſe be exceeding good for you, to keep your ſelf very humble, and more carefully to watch over your ſelf. For as you know, he that hath any great Treaſure, hath the more need carefully to guard them from Robbers. And certainly,

ly, thoſe helliſh Robbers, the evil ſpirits are very much affrighted and always terrified, as often as they perceive that God Almighty hath beſtow'd upon any man ſo great a treaſure. And therefore be ſure, they will turn every ſtone, and make uſe of all their ſtrength and cunning, to ſteal from you, or rob you of this Treaſure. Therefore it exceedingly concerns you to keep it with all care and vigilancy. But you will be able, by no means better to preſerve it, then by a ſilent, true and profound humility. Finally, as things are with you, there is no more need that for the future, I ſhould converſe with you, as an inſtructer of you; No verily, I now exceedingly deſire to be taught by you, and intend here to remain ſo long, till I have heard diverſe of your Sermons. And becauſe (as you have acknowledged) you have felt and experienced a certain great power, and ſuch as is underſtood both in Nature and Grace; I very much deſire, if the Lord permit that you would again Preach.

Maſter. What advice therefore do you give me, (deareſt Son) for I have pawned ſeveral of my Books, and have taken up upon them, no leſs then thirty Crowns.

Layman. Send ſome body for them; and I on (Gods behalf) will redeem them, and will

will give thee ſo many Crowns; and if after you have redeemed your Books, any thing ſhall remain, you ſhall reſtore it to God: ſo the Books were brought and redeemed.

After theſe things, the Doctor cauſed it to be given out, and ſpread abroad, that upon the third day after he intended to Preach, which when it was heard, every body much wondered; and becauſe of the novelty of the thing, a huge multitude of People came together. The Doctor therefore when he was come, and ſaw ſo many People come together, got up into the Pulpit, and covering his Eyes with his hood, he thus prayed to himſelf, *O Mercyful God, if it may be pleaſing to thee, grant I may ſo ſpeak and do, as that thy moſt acceptable will may be done in me.* Preſently after he had ſpoken theſe Words, a pang of weeping without any endeavour of his, fell upon him, & he ſhed many moſt ſweet Tears; which continued ſo long, that the People began to be weary of ſo tedious expectation, So that one of the crowd; ſaid with a loud voyce; How long (I pray Sir) do you intend to keep us? Now it grows late, and if you will not begin, ſay ſo, that we may riſe and go home. And when the Doctor himſelf did take notice, that the time was nigh paſt; he ſaid again unto the Lord.

Ah

Ah Merciful Lord my God, if it be thy will stop these Tears, and grant I may Preach this Sermon! Which thing if thou deny me, I fear that thou judgest, I have not yet been sufficiently derided, notwithstanding fullfil in me all thy good pleasure according to thy will. But whatever he said, or whatever he pray'd, he nothing at all availed: but his Tears rather more prevailed. Perceiving therefore that it was the Divine will & pleasure; he said to the People weeping. Truly beloved, it sufficiently grieves me that you have been so long in expectation. But so it is, that I cannot at this time bring forth one Word. When the People heard this, they arose and went their way. And straightway the fame of this passage spread it self through the whole City; So that then again, the Doctor began to be laugh'd at, and to be had in contempt; every one saying; See now we perceive as clear as none-day, that he is stark mad, and deprived of his Reason and Sences. Whereupon his Brethren did severely and solemnly suspend him from his Office of Preaching, telling him that he brought upon them no small damage and shame, since by his singular and unusual manner of living, he had weakened his brain. Among these troubles, the Doctor sent for the

the Layman, and told him in order all that had befaln him. The Layman anſwered him; Be of good courage (worthy Sir) neither let any terror take hold of you: it is certain your affairs were never in ſo good plight as now they are; for the Omnipotent God will have you wholly to be his friend. And therefore it is probable, that till then ſomething of pride lay hid in your mind, which now God hath mortified in you; when being ſet up in a high place, after the Example of Chriſt, you were derided by men. And truly you ought with a willing mind to accept ſo great a Gift of God; for be confident, what remainder of ſin lay hid in you, is now wholly aboliſhed and caſt out. Wherefore Sir, be of good courage, and humbly bear with patience this your humiliation. Neither let this ſeem to you a new and unuſual matter, for I have alſo known the like befal others. And take heed that you do in no wiſe condemn this burden of the Croſs, which the Lord hath ſent you. But be adviſed by me, to retire your ſelf from all humane converſe, for this five days, in honour of the five Wounds of Chriſt. Afterwards you may ſpeak with your Pryor, and peradventure he will permit you to Preach in ſome Monaſtry. But if he ſhall deny you; entreat

him

him that he would first make tryal of you, and give you leave once in your Covent, to read a Lecture to your Brethren. To all which words of the Layman, the Doctor yielded obedience willingly; five days being spent, and leave being asked and obtained of the Pryor; The Doctor read so excellent a Lecture to his Brethren, that they did all exceedingly admire his excellent, Spiritual and Divine Doctrine. So that presently it was concluded by them all in the Chapter-house, that they would make tryal of him once more, granting him leave once more to Preach to the People. Wherefore they gave order to one of the Brothers, who was to Preach in a certain Covent, that after Sermon he give notice to the People, that the Doctor intended the next day to Preach in that place. Therefore that Brother, after he had ended his Sermon, said to the People, I am commanded to give you notice that to morrow in the forenone in this Place, the Doctor intends to Preach. But if any thing befal him like that which lately happened to him, impute it in no wise to me, seeing I do but what I am commanded. Yet take this for certain, that lately he read to us in our Covent, such a Lecture, so Excellent, so Divine, Profound and

and Spiritual, that many of our fraternity dare say, they have not these many years heard so Divine and Heavenly Doctrine. But what he will do before you I know not. The next day after the Doctor went to the Monastry appointed (it was a Monastry of Virgins;) And when he was thither come, he began his Sermon as followeth.

A Rare and Devout Sermon, which the Doctor *Preached in a certain Monastery after his Illumination, concerning Christ the true Bridegroom of the Soul: and how the Soul ought to follow him in True, Modest, Humble and Patient Resignation: and how Christ doth first divers wayes prove the Soul, and at last gratiously receiveth it. This Sermon may not unfitly be Preached upon the Festival of some Virgine.*

Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go you forth to meet him, *Ma.*25.

IT is now two years ago (if I be not deceived Dearly Beloved) since I last Preached

Preached unto you; and in that my last Sermon, I delivered to you 24 Particulars, or Articles. And as you may remember, it was my usual custom at that time, to mingle many Latine Words and Sentences in my Sermons, which for the future I shall in no wise do. But when I have a mind to use the Latine tongue, I will do it amongst those who are skilful in that Language, and can understand what I have to say. But now for the obtaining of Divine grace and assistance, let us say over the Angels Salutation.

The Verse which I have pitched upon for my Text (Dearly Beloved) and to which I shall confine my self throughout my whole discourse, is this: *Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go you forth to meet him.*

The Bridegroom, is Christ Jesus; the Spouse, is humane nature. We therefore all (Dearly Beloved) are called Spouses of Christ, and we ought therefore in duty to go forth to meet him. But alas! the fault is on our part. For the true Ways and right Pathes, which lead to meet the Bridegroom, are become very defart and overgrown: And we, alas! do little take notice of them, and too seldom and very rarely

rarely now adayes is any one found, that entred into thoſe Pathes. But there are many other Roads, in which multitudes go aſtray. So that rarely do any now ariſe and go forth to meet the Bridegroom, as I ſhall God willing hereafter ſhew you. But now, leaſt I ſhould be too tedious, I will in ſilence paſs over. But whereas we are all called Spouſes, I muſt firſt lay open what behoveth every Spouſe to do, that ſhe may go forth to meet her Bridegroom. Firſt therefore, it is the duty of every faithful Spouſe, to be baſhful and modeſt, and to avoid all things that may offend her Bridegroom; as for example, ſuch as the vain glory of this fallacious and ill rewarding world, pride, envy, and other common ſins of the world: Alſo, all the pleaſures of corrupt nature, whether it be in profit or idleneſs, or in any other things whatever, but what are upon a true and rational account neceſſary. And when the Spouſe hath rejected ſuch and the like things for the love of her Bridegroom, then ſhe beginneth ſomewhat to pleaſe her Bridegroom. Secondly, If thou wilt yet more pleaſe him, ſhe muſt humbly bow and incline her ſelf, and offer up her whole ſelf

nnto him, saying both with heart and voice, *Ah most sweet Lord and Bridegroom, thou knowest the hearts of all; therefore I do with my whole heart profess unto thee, that I will freely and with a willing mind do all whatever I shall know or be able, which thou teaching me, I shall see to be acceptable and pleasing to thee, neither will I ever depart from thee, but perpetually and with all my might cleave unto thee.* When therefore the Spouse hath thus bethrothed her self, the Bridegroom now turning his face to her, begins to behold her, and commands that some rich Jewel be given her; you will ask me what Jewel? I answer, such an one as this, namely, That she be sufficed to be exercised both inwardly & outwardly with divers temptations, as his manner is to do with all his singular and choice Friends. Then it falls out, that if the Spouse be yet somewhat tender and delicate, she straight addresses her self to her Bridegroom, saying. *Ah my most merciful Lord, these are exceeding strange and unusual things, and too too heavy, such as I never felt the like, and they make me greatly fear, how I shall be able to bear them, and subsist under them. Wherefore I earnestly entreat thee, most dear Lord, to*

take

take off this burden, and free me of it. The Bridegroom anſwereth her: Tell me my beloved Spouſe, doth it ſeem equitable to you, that the Spouſe ſhould fare better then her Bridegroom, thou muſt firſt of neceſſity in ſome meaſure follow him. And certainly it is altogether comely, juſt and alſo tollerable, that the Spouſe ſhould endure ſomething, at leaſt for the love of her Bridegroom When this the pleaſure of the Bridegroom is made known, the Spouſe is ſtricken with terrour, and trembling, ſaith to the Bridegroom. *Oh! my Lord and Bridegroom, I beſeech you be not angry with me, for I am now ready to obey thee;* Therefore ſuffer what thou pleaſeſt to fall upon me, I will through the aſſiſtance of thy grace bear all for thy ſake, willingly and contentedly. When the Bridegroom hears this, he conceives a greater love to his Spouſe. And therefore beſtows upon her yet a more excellent gift, namely, that all her performances, exerciſes, wayes, and all her works, yea, and at leaſt whatever ſhe does or leaves undone, although they be all good in themſelves, yet they ſeem to her ſelf wholly unſavoury. Furthermore, ſhe accounts her whole time loſt, whatever ſhe ſpends it about, though that which ſhe doth

be good; and that in all ſhe offends the Bridegroom, and continually fears that after this life ſhe ſhall ſuffer grievous puniſhment for all. Furthermore, this gift is granted her, that ſhe be had in derision by moſt, and that her whole life and converſation, as meer folly be vilified and ſet at naught by men. But by this means the Spouſe becomes much weaked in her nature; ſo that ſhe thinks every hour ſhe ſhall dye no other death. And whereas ſhe is yet tender, faint-hearted, and fearful, ſhe is exceeding terrified. Wherefore ſhe earneſtly calls upon her Bridegroom, ſaying. Why is it moſt ſweet Bridegroom, that thou leaveſt me in this ſad condition, when thou notwithſtanding knoweſt full well that I cannot poſſibly undergo it, but it will coſt me my life. The Bridegroom anſwers her, Why how now my choſen Spouſe, if thou wilt go forth to meet the Bridegroom, it is equitable and congruous, that thou ſhouldſt at leaſt in ſome things at firſt follow him, and travail part of the journey he went. Whereas therefore the Bridegroom ſuffered death for the love of his Bride, and endured moſt direful torments, and innumerable pains 33 years, think you it not congruous to reaſon, and every way fitting, that the Spouſe alſo

alſo out of love ſhould endure ſome hazard of death. Certainly, if your love were great & faithful toward your Bridegroom, it would eaſily ſhut out all ſuch fear from you. The Spouſe fearing, ſuch or the like, anſwers from the Bridegroom, is ceaſed upon with exceeding great fear and ſhame: and ſpeaks thus from her moſt inward bowels, with heart and mouth to her Bridegroom. Now moſt loving Bridegroom, I fully underſtand that I have done unjuſtly and evilly: and I am even overcome with fear, and do grieve truly with my whole heart; becauſe I have not reſigned my ſelf faithfully unto thee, even unto death. And behold, hence-forward I commit my whole ſelf to thee; That whatever thy will and pleaſure is, the ſame may be mine, whether it be ſweet or whether it be bitter, whether it be health or whether it be ſickneſs, whether death or life, or whatever it be that thy pleaſure is ſhall come upon me, ſhall be welcome to me. And ſo for the future, I wholly renounce my own will; and ſo ſurrender and offer it up to thee, as never more hereafter to re-call it or deſire it.

Thou alſo moſt merciful Bridegroom, do with me a ſinful wretch, whatever thou wilt, both in Time and in Eternity. For as

much as of me is, I plainly underſtand that I am unworthy that the earth ſhould bear me. When now the Bridegroom perceives ſo reſolved, ſo conſtant & perfect a will in his Spouſe; What do you think he doth to his Spouſe? Even this, he hath mercy on her; but how you will ask? Why thus? He will then firſt reach out to her an excellent and glorious Cup, namely this, That over and above all the preſſures, temptations and ſtraights in which already ſhe is held, he permits that far more, and far more grievous then ever ſhe ſuffered before to fall upon her. The Spouſe by this time underſtanding this to be the pleaſure of her Bridegroom, ſuffers all willingly and freely, for the love of him. And bowing her ſelf humbly to her Lord, ſaith; Even thus moſt dear Bridegroom is it moſt fitting and meet, that not what I will thou ſhouldſt will, but what thy Will and Pleaſure is that I ſhould will. Wherefore for thy ſake, I will freely and with a willing mind take off this Cup, and receive this gift of thine, let it torture and afflict my nature as much as it will; nevertheleſs, I accept of it as at thy hand. Whileſt therefore the Bridegroom in his Eternal Wiſdom beholds this will and reſolution in his Spouſe; ſhe is rendred above

meaſure

meaſure dear unto him. So that even out of ſuperabundant love, he permits her to ſuffer through her whole nature by the ſaid Cup of pretious affliction given unto her, until ſhe be throughly purged and cleanſed from all her ſpots, ſins, and imperfections. But then he ſaith unto her. Ariſe now my beautiful and comely Spouſe, for now thou art all fair, and there is no ſpot in thee; and withall looks upon her ſo amiably, and kindly, as is far above all Expreſſion.

After this the Eternal Father of the Bridegroom cometh alſo to the nuptials, and joyfully ſaith to them: Ariſe quickly make haſte. It is time that they be led to the Temple, and joyned together in a marriage league. And taking both the Bridegroom, and the Bride, leads them both together to the Temple, and joyns them mutually to himſelf, and with ſo ſtrong and great a mutual nuptial love doth couple and bind them one to the other; that neither in time, nor in eternity can they ever more be put aſunder, or ſeparated one from the other. Now whilſt theſe nuptials are celebrating, the Son the Bridegrom ſaith to his Father: Eternal and moſt loving Father, whom will it pleaſe you, ſhall be our Cup-bearer, and Comptroller of our nuptial Feaſts? The Father made an-

swer, and said: This office and business belongs to the Holy Ghost, and he shall be the Governour of the Feast that day. Presently without any delay, that Magnificent, Highest, and Most adorable Cup-bearer gives the Spouse to drink, and take off such an overflowing Cup of Love, that she is wholly overflowed, and drowned in Charity; and altogether flowes forth, and is dissolved, and melted into her Bridegroom. And falling into an Exstasie, she becomes so drunk even with over much Love, that she looseth and forgetteth her self, and all other Creatures, both such as are in time, and such as are in Eternity. For truly (beloved) whoever attaineth to these nuptials, the same then first is arrived at the very true solemnity of joys indeed, and of Eternal nuptials. And whosoever is made such a Spouse, such a one is become a true Worshipper; adoring the
John 4: Father in Spirit and Truth: and the same hath found peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. For verily in these nuptials there is joy upon joy: as also there the peace is greater, and Triumphant joy more abundant in one hour, then all Creatures whether in time, or in Eternity can make. For the joy, which the Spouse here takes in her Bridegroom, and receives from him, is such, and so great, that

no

no Reaſon, no *Senſe* can poſſibly underſtand it, attain to it, or be capable of it. At theſe words, One cryed out with a lond voyce: It is trne. it is true, it is true. And immediatly fell to the Earth, as if he had been dead. At which ſight, a certain Woman ſpake aloud to the Doctor; give over Maſter Doctor, or elſe this man will give up the Ghoſt in our arms. The Doctor anſweared? Well dearly beloved, if it ſeems good to the Bridegroom to take away with him this *Spouſe*, we ought willingly to leave her to him. But be ye ſilent a little while, for I ſhall even now make an end.

Let us all (I beſeech you, dearly beloved) let us all with one conſent lift up our voyces unto Heaven, unto the Lord, imploring his mercy. For truly, it is a thing extreamly to be bewailed by us, that we ſhould be made ſuch Fools, ſo dull, and ſottiſh; as that, notwithſtanding we are none of us ignorant, how we are all called the Spouſes of God; yet ſcarce one of us, or very rarely, hath the courage to hazard his Nature, in manfully following the Bridegroom, until he be found worthy to be made partaker, and taſte by experience ſomewhat at leaſt of the wonderfull and moſt pleaſant ſolemnization, of theſe ſupream Triumphs, and moſt happy nuptials.

Verily,

Verily, in these latter times there are but few such found, as do in truth go forth to meet the Bridegroom; such, as of old time there were many. Wherefore it exceedingly concerns every one, to examine, and seriously and diligently to try himself; and to have a vigilant care of himself: For now the time draws near, and is even at the door, when the greatest part of men will indeed have Eyes, and yet see not, and Ears, and yet hear not.

Wherefore now, my dearly beloved, come on, let us all do our utmost endeavour to come to the experiencing of these most pleasant, & even too too happy nuptials. But that I may pursue my purpòle, & come to a conclusion; After that the Bridegroom and the Bride are gone asunder, & withdrawn each from other, & the Bride again coming to her self, perceives that she is yet left in this time of exile, she saith to her self; Ah me miserable wretch, am I here again? And begins to be somewhat sad. But she is now so modest, so sunk into the depth of humility, and finally so perfectly, and fundamentally resigned to her Bridegroom, that she durst in no measure think of the injoying, or desiring his company, for she very well knowns, that she is altogether unworthy of it. Notwithstanding

the

the Bridegroom neglects not ever now and then to have an Eye upon his fair beloved, and dearest Bride, knowing full well that none can comfort her but himself. And now in the winding up of my Discourse, let me give you this caution (dearly Beloved.) Let it not seem strange unto you, what I have said unto you touching the Discourse, which the Bridegroom and the Bride have with one another. Certainly no man can believe, except he have had experience of it; what strange kind, and unheard of Discourses the Bride hath with the Bridegroom; Nevertheless the Holy Scriptures also oft make mention, how a loving and devoted Soul Discourses with the Bridegroom, and in such a manner, that her words hardly will bear sense with them. Which also sometimes happens even at this day; namely, that the Bride useth such expressions to the Bridegroom, that if any one heard them, he would certainly say, she were either drunk or mad. But I fear (Beloved) I am too tedious.

God therefore and our Lord Jesus Christ the true Bridegroom grant, that we may be all made his true Spouses, and be able to go forth to meet him in true and great Humility, and deep and perfect resignation of our selves

selves to him, to the Praise and Glory of the Almighty God. *Amen.*

Of certain wonderful Things, which befel some upon the Hearing the foregoing Sermon, which afterwards were understood. From whence we may take notice, How great things God worketh by fit Instruments; namely, by the Sermon of any one Illuminated Mans, much more then by the Sermons of an hundred others.

THIS Sermon being ended, the Master went into the Temple, dispatched Divine Service, and administred the Holy Sacrament of the Lords Body to very many good men. But in the Garden of the Monastry, there remained sitting above fourty men. Which thing the Layman had taken notice off. And when the Sacrament was ended, coming to the Doctor, he told him of it: and taking him with him, led him to the place, where he might see it. But in the mean time, whilst the Master was administring the Sacrament, all were risen, except twelve, whom they found sitting there still.

When

When the Master saw this, he said to the Layman: Dear Son, what shall we do to these men? Then the Layman went to them, and touched, and jogged them one by one, but they felt nothing, and seemed to be no otherwise then dead. At which the Master did not a little wonder, for he had never seen any such thing in the least before. And saith again to the Layman; Think you *Son* that these men are dead? The Layman smiling said, if they be dead, it is the fault of you, and the Bridegroom.

Master. If the Bridegroom have a hand with me in the business, we shall easily find a Remedy for this evil.

Layman. You need not at all doubt Sir, but that all these men shall live yet in time; and I could wish, that you would speak to the Holy Virgins of this Monastery, that they would cause them to be carryed within the first Cloisters of their Monastery, to some warm place, least by reason of the damp ground they should catch harm. Accordingly it was done; the Virgins very modestly commanding them to be carried into warm Rooms: and they told the Doctor, that they also had one of their Sisters rapped into an extasie, and lying upon her Bed, whither they had carryed her as one dead.

dead. The Master answered them, I beseech you (Beloved) be not troubled at this thing; but when any of them comes to themselves, give them (if they will take it) some kind of warm broth. The Virgins answered him, That they would willingly do. And so the Doctor together with the Layman departed, and went together to the Doctors Cell: Where the Layman said to the Doctor. What think you, Reverend Sir, did ever the like matter befal you since you were born? you see now, what great things God doth work by a fit Instrument. And I doubt not, but very many more will be sensible of this your Sermon, and what was done at it: For they will tell one another. Wherefore I shall like it well, if you please, that you would suffer these your weak Sons and Daughters to rest a while. For truly, this Sermon will find them work enough for a long time. But I verily think many would reap much benefit, if you would likewise (God permitting) Preach to the secular men. For now during this time of Lent, they will more readily run to Sermons. And I believe, very many will flock together the more, because of this Sermon, which you preached to day.

Master. If you advice me to it (dear Son)

Son) I will willingly follow your counſel. And (as I remember) this next Sabbath day, is the Feaſt of the Virgin to. *Gartrude.*

Layman. And pray what is the Goſpel appointed for that day?

Maſter. It is concerning the Woman taken in adultry, and brought to Chriſt. But whatever the Goſpel be for that day, I intend not to ſtick only to that; But will eaſily take from thence ſome ſentence or other, which ſhall be the ſcope of my whole Sermon; and from it I will take occaſion as Divine Grace ſhall aſſiſt me, to ſet before Mens Eyes their ſins and Iniquities. Neither do I much care, what becomes of me for ſo doing. Though I eaſily believe that firſt this will be my portion; my Brethren will do what they can to expel me out of the Monaſtery; for I am reſolved neither to flatter them, nor any body elſe: but will ſimply ſpeak the naked truth, as the Lord ſhall enable me: neither will I balk that, though I ſhould be therefore to ſuffer death.

Layman. Truly (I believe Sir) for theſe two or three hundred years, or more by paſt, there hath not been ſo much need, to ſpeak the naked Truth ſimply and ſeriouſly, as now in theſe our days. Wherefore be not at all moved

moved with whatever can happen. For if you be not suffered to abide here, you may be some where else: and whersoever you be, God will in no wise forsake you. The Master therefore gave order to one, that at the end of his Sermon he should give notice to the People, that he intended to Preach the next Sabbath day, which was consecrated to St. *Gertrude*. When that day came, a very great multitude of Men of divers ranks came together, to hear the Doctors Sermon. Who coming at the time appointed, Thus began his Discourse.

A Sermon of the Doctors Preached to the People, in which he sharply reproves Sin.

WHat shall I say, or where shall I begin my Discourse (Dearly Beloved) seeing 'tis obvious to every Eye, how ill it is with us in many things, and unless we amend our Lives, undoubtedly things will grow worse, and worse, and more dangerous? But before I enter upon my Discourse, I earnestly beg this of you all; that none of you would take that grievously, which I shall say unto you. For truly, it is more needful at this time to speak the Truth plainly,

plainly, and openly, then it hath been any time theſe two or three hundred years, or upwards. Whereupon I have reſolved with my ſelf to reprove the Faults of us all in general, and not at all to flatter any man; but without any daubing, obſcure gloſſes, or comments, to ſpeak ſimply and nakedly, whatever the Lord ſhall teach, or ſuggeſt to me: being ready for the Love of God, to undergo any thing that ſhall be laid upon me for this cauſe. But if I ſhall be hindred by the ſhortneſs of the time, to finiſh now what I have to ſay, I ſhall at another time (if liberty be granted me) make an end of it. Truly, I have purpoſed to handle ſo many things in this Sermon, that I will neither meddle with the Goſpel for the day, nor ſpeak any thing of bleſſed *Gartrude*, to whom the day is conſecrated, nor mingle any Latine ſentences in my Diſcourſe, that ſo I may have the longer time to ſpeak what I intend. I have only taken for my Text a Verſe or two out of this days Goſpel, upon which I will only inſiſt. The Words are theſe;

The Phariſees bringing a Woman taken in Adultry to our Lord, ſet her in the midſt, and accuſed her, that ſhe ought to be ſtoned; The Lord ſaid unto them, He that is without Sin among you, let him caſt the firſt ſtone.

When they heard this, they went one after another out of the Temple. Verily (Beloved) if in these our days, our Lord Jesus Christ should speak the same Words to us Christians; I verily believe, very few of us could remain behind, who ought not to go forth. And least whilst I am reproving others for their faults, I should seem to pass by my own, and the sins of our Order; I will begin with my self, and my Brethren, the Preachers and Confessors. How many think you of us, would stay behind upon these Words of our Saviour, who being conscious to themselves of no sin, would not be compelled to go forth? Truly we are called, and accompted poor, and live upon the Patrimony of the Crucifix, that is, upon the Almes of the faithful. But how worthily in all things we answer this our calling, the Lord knows, and the Devil knows. Truly I fear there are very few among us, who in hearing confessions do purely love God, and aim at his Glory: Of which thing this is an evident Argument, that for the most part, we are more ready to hear the confessions of the Rich, than of the Poor. And that this is so, is plain by this. If any such of us be taking the confession of any Poor man; and word be brought us that such a Lord, or such

ſuch a Lady is come, we preſently ariſe in haſt, and diſmiſſing the Poor man, hie us away to my Lord, or to my Lady. And why is this? but becauſe we are covetous, and love honour, and are tickled, if we can make our braggs, that more Lords and Ladies make their confeſſions to us, then to others: in the mean time we make mention of the Poor Saints. But how, and in what manner we behave our ſelves towards thoſe Rich ones, God the righteous Judge knoweth. Certainly it is our duty to teach them the way of Truth, and uprightneſs, and in what manner they ought to lead their lives; and not, when they deſire to have their wicked and unlawful cuſtomes indulged, and permitted, to frame and invent many ſubtil Gloſſes, and ſhifts, and tell them their leud cuſtoms are not repugnant to the Scriptures. Nevertheleſs we tell them, that which is falſe. For the Scripture no where ſaith, that covetouſneſs, pride luxury, or the like ſins may be indulged, or permitted; Neither is this any other than the inventions and council of the malignant one. Wherefore (my Beloved) thoſe of us, as are ſuch Confeſſours, do ſhew unto you not the way of truth, but the way of perdition: and ſo we firſt run head-long into the Pit of eter-

nal perdition, and then also lead you along with us into the same; there is onely this difference, that we shall be thrust lowermost, and you cast upon us into those pains. But though ye rich men are not so deeply plunged into those pains as we; yet your condition shall not therefore be the better; seeing your own Reason, and Conscience often tells you, that we in no wise shew unto you the right, and safe way. Furthermore, we in duty ought also (beloved) when we are in the Pulpit, to preach unto you the right way, and in few words, without lying and glossing, to shew unto you the very truth. Which if it ever were needful to do, is now much more needful. But alas! the most of us, are too too foolish, and cowardly, and stand more in awe of men, than of God. Now the reason of this is, that in these our times, matters are come to that pass, that if any of us will speak the very truth, he will hardly be tollerated almost in any Monastery, nor suffered to Preach: and presently another shall be put into his place, who will reject, and confute whatever the former hath said.

Truly (Beloved) things are not right among us; therefore I will not be partial, but speak the Truth. Nay, rather I will (as

(as the Lord ſhall enable me) ſimply ſet before all our eyes in general, of what ſtate or condition ſoever we be, our vices, and failings: let what will befal me therefore; I will endure it all willingly, for the love of my Lord God. He of you (Beloved) who is without ſin, (if there be ſuch a one) let him caſt the firſt ſtone at them I have mentioned. What I have hitherto ſpoken, may, at the firſt view, ſeem as if I had onely aimed at my Brethren of our Order. But my intention was nothing leſs, than onely to mark out them: but my reproof was directed againſt all thoſe, together with our ſelves, who hear confeſſions, and are Preachers of the Word: whether they be Paſtors, or Prieſts, or of ſome Religious Order, of what rank ſoever they be, to whom the aforeſaid Authority is committed, and given: To all theſe (I would have you to underſtand) was my diſcourſe directed. Here now I ſhould ſay ſomething of the Biſhops and other Prelates of great Authority, and Power, who hold many Churches. But I ſuppoſe here is not any one preſent. Nevertheleſs, leaſt any ſhould think, that if I paſs over theſe in ſilence, I do it for fear of them, or upon ſome other conſideration, as if I would flatter, and ſeek

to curry favour; I ſhall (I ſay therefore) ſay ſomething of them: and there will not be wanting ſome, or other it may be, that will go and tell them what I ſay; which thing I ſhall not at all miſlike, nor be troubled at. Certainly, in what Province ſoever any Biſhoprick is, the Biſhop is the Paſtor of that Province, how far ſoever the bounds of his Juriſdiction or Dioceſs extends. He is, I ſay the Paſtor, and Head of his Biſhoprick, and that, for to feed his People; and to take all vigilant care, that the whole Flock committed to his charge, be trained up in the due obſervation of Chriſtian Religion, and Chriſtian Ordinances. But alas! when as now for the moſt part the Paſtors are blind, no wonder, if their ſheep go aſtray, and become a prey for Wolves. But what need I uſe many words, when you eaſily perceive what I hint at? I fear truly, that many of our great Prieſts, and potent Prelates, who hold at one time many Churches, are likewiſe held and entangled themſelves in many, and grievous ſins; and are ſometimes even worſe than thieves, and robbers; for theſe onely rob men of their Goods, but theſe wicked, and unworthy Prieſts rob and plunder even God of his Goods; for all Church livings are Gods, and his Almes, which of right

right he hath given to none, but to ſuch, as are careful to ſpend them in his ſervice. But when it comes to paſs, that ſuch a Prieſt loden with many Churches, dyes, what kind of Will and Teſtament leaveth he to his Heirs? Verily, a lamentable one; for the ſame way, which he walked in himſelf, doth he ſhew unto his Heirs. For his Heirs greedily catch his Goods, and haſten with them to the ſame place of Perdition, whither he is gone before. At leaſt if they dye without Reſtitution, I am not able in a ſhort Diſcourſe to expreſs, how dangerous their eſtate and condition is. *But let him who is without ſin among you, caſt the firſt ſtone at them.*

And now in the next place, I muſt have a word to the Secular Prieſts, of inferiour rank; many of whom (I fear) do too too ſinfully, and dangerouſly lead their lives: Plainly, whatever Prieſt follows the courſe of Gameſters, and Fornicators, ſuch a one is worſe than *Judas*, who betrayed our Lord and Saviour: as it may eaſily be proved.

For *Judas* was a thief, a ſlippery fellow, a betrayer of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. But a Prieſt, he hath an Eccleſiaſtical Benefice, which is Gods, who therefore hath granted

it to him, that he ſhould perform his Office, and permits him to take of it what is neceſſary for life, and what he cannot without inconvenience want; but if any thing remain over and above, ſeeing that is totally Gods; if he reſtore not to God in his poor Members, but ſpends it upon ſome other unlawful uſe; ſuch a one truly commits a worſe theft than *Judas* did. For ſuch a Prieſt conſumes the Goods of his God at Dice, and divers other wayes doth waſt the Almes given to the poor, truly worſe than *Judas* did. Furthermore, ſuch a Prieſt with the ſame impure hands, fears not to handle his God upon the Altar, with which he hath touched filthily a vile Harlot; and kiſſeth her with the ſame mouth, by which God entred; and gives her his heart, which he ought to devote to God alone; and at laſt breaks his Vow, and Oath, which he made unto God, and therewith betrayes God, when he joyns himſelf to a woman, when as he ought to be united to God onely: neither doth it ſuffice him, to do this (as *Judas* did) but once, but he doth it often. Truly, *Judas* did but once receive the Lord in the Sacrament; and peradventure he neither was conſecrated, as is the Prieſt, nor had made a Vow of continence, as doth the Prieſt. From hence there-

therefore do you your ſelves now judge (Beloved) whether ſuch a Prieſt be not worſe than even *Judas* himſelf. Verily, I am ſufficiently afraid, that many now adayes out-ſtrip *Judas*. But let all ſuch (I beſeech them) conſider the frailty of their condition, and uncertainty of their life, and from their hearts amend their lifes; which of all things doth moſt concern them. Truly, I cannot but extreamly wonder, that any woman can be guilty of ſo much preſumption, as to dare to ſuffer her ſelf once to be touched by any Prieſt. But now if Secular Prieſts, who are ſubject to the foreſaid vices, are worſe than *Judas* the Traytor: we, who are called the Religious, and live in Sacred Monaſtical Orders, if we commit the like, we certainly are yet far more wicked. But if a Prelate commit ſuch like, his ſins are yet more grievous. If a Biſhop, he ſins yet more notorious. If laſtly the Pope, his ſins of all others were the worſt, and moſt heavy. For by how much the higher the ſtation is, by ſo much the more grievous is the fall, and greater the fault. But if a Virgin dedicated to God, a Monaſtical Virgin, ſhall commit any of theſe things, ſhe doth exceeding enormouſly ſin. For ſuch a one ought both in body, and Soul

to conform her ſelf according to the example of the Virgin Mother. For as our Lady the Glorious Virgin, brought forth her only Son without any violation of her Virginity; ſo all the conſecrated Virgins have made a Vow to follow the example of the Moſt Bleſſed Mother, in all chaſtity; that they may be the better enabled to breed, and bring forth God, the Son of God continually in their hearts. *But who is there here without ſin? If ſuch a one there be, let him firſt caſt a ſtone at all theſe, I have mentioned.*

But now whilſt I ſtay over long in reproving onely Spiritual Perſons, or the Clergy; you Seculars and Lay-people may ſuppoſe I have forgot you: Therefore now I muſt bring you forth into view alſo. For neither are you without ſin, but even as we, ſo are ye in many things reproveable. But there is no reaſon, why any one ſhould caſt all that is ſaid, upon another; but rather examine himſelf, and his own heart; where I believe (if he do it as he ought) he will find ſo much buſineſs at home, that he will hardly be mindful of others faults. But I beſeech you (Beloved) do not take grievouſly thoſe things, which I am now about to ſpeak. Truly, I ſhall begin with the Supream

pream Judges and Magiſtrates of this City. You therefore my Lords the Judges & Magiſtrates, (if any of you be here) tell me I beſeech you, how ſtands it, and what agreement is there between you and God? Ye your ſelves know that ye admit no man into your Order, except he be of ſufficient age, and have his lawful Wife. And this you do juſtly enough. But why this is done, ye do not in the mean time well underſtand. Heretofore in old time, the antient Judges did very carefully and with much prudence enact this; that no young men ſhould be admitted in their Order; but ſuch as had firſt arrived at a Juſt age; that ſo in that time they might attain to the knowledge of the Civil, Imperial, and Provincial Laws; and learn the Laws of their Anceſtors, and Statutes of their Countrey. And when they had arrived at a fitting age, and had thoroughly learned all theſe Lawes; If they were alſo Juſt men, and endowed with the fear of the Lord; ſo that they might be accounted worthy of truſt, and fit for ſuch an Office; then at laſt did the Antients chuſe them, and receive them into their Number. That all, who are of your Order, ought to have lawful Wives, it was therefore ordained, leaſt they ſhould deſire in their hearts or minds

minds any other women, besides their own Wives. Here now, I beseech you, my Lords examine your selves, whether you be exact Immitators of your Ancestors. , Truly, it doth not so appear to me. For you admit many into your Order for favour and affection onely; and admit such to sit upon the Judgement Seat, who, as it is sufficiently known, have no fear of God; love riches, and receive money where ever they can get it, caring not at all whether lawfully or unlawfully. But truely such gifts and rewards, which are thus received, whilst they are in Judgement, do subvert, and pervert Judgement and Justice.

Furthermore, you receive Adulterers into your Number, which, yet is altogether unlawful, and in special manner forbidden, that such should be admitted to sit in Judgement; whose lives are contrary to God, and good Lawes. And for this cause oftentimes false, and unjust Judgements are passed; which doubtless the Lord God, the Supream Judge, will heavily revenge at the last day, upon all those, who have given them. For the Lord himself hath appointed Justice; and Judgement is his. If any one therefore turn Gods Justice, into Injustice; he will certainly not suffer it long to pass unrevenged.

Behold

Behold my Lords, ye that are Judges and Rulers of the People, I have choſen to begin with you; becauſe you hold the Supream Power of Judicature. If you therefore reform and amend the Supream Judicatories, of which ye are Preſidents; the inferiour will eaſily after your example be reformed: becauſe your Authority will ſway with them, and bring it to paſs. But if there be neglect on your part in this matter; what ever is done amiſs in inferiour Courts, will be charged upon you, as being moſtly the cauſe of it. Believe me, your condition is very dangerous, except you amend your lifes. For doubleſs Juſtice is no ſmall matter in the ſight of God; but is a buſineſs full of difficulty. And we ſee in the Old Teſtament, how God was wont grievouſly to revenge unjuſt Judgements, Adultery, and Pride: And doubtleſs he doth the ſame at this day; although we are grown ſo ſottiſh, and ſtupid, as not to perceive it. Beloved, if it be not burdenſome to you, I will briefly tell you a ſtrange, and terrible thing; namely, how great miſchiefs, and grievous ſins had their riſe from one act of Adultery, within theſe few years. Neither will I tell you a Dream, or a Fable; but what I my ſelf know to be true. When

I were in the thirtieth year of my age, and by the Order of my Superiours followed my Studies in a certain Town; I became familiarly acquainted with two Citizens of the place. They were both young men, and very rich Merchants. These two loved one the other entirely, and managed their Trade in common: they had both of them young Wives much alike; who did also no less love one another. And when it happened at any time, that either of them went from home about business; (such trust and confidence had they in each other) he alwayes committed his Wife, his House, and all his Goods to the others care. It fell out, that after I had been acquainted with them about a year; One of their Wives, came to me at a certain time, and privately told me, with a mournful voice, and many tears; That she had been, of a long time, an heinous sinner, and that she should be no better than a fire-brand of Hell. Which when she had said, she shed such abundance of tears, that she could not speak one word more: I being moved with her tears, and suffering with her, in her sorrow, I desired her to lay open the cause of so great a sadness, promising her, by Gods assistance, (whose mercy I told her was infinite) to give her

her faithful Council. At last, she taking heart, she said, Ah Sir, my Daughter N. is not ligitimate, but begot in adultery by my Husbands Friend. For when, above five years ago, my Husband was a great while from home, his Friend upon a certain time, abusing that too much confidence, which you know, we have in one another; whilst we were familiarly conversing together, fell at last in the sin of adultery with me; and of him I conceived my foresaid Daughter N. Furthermore to aggravate my damnation, I never made confession of this sin, after this my fall; but like the Traytor *Judas*, have nine times since received with polluted heart and mouth, the most Holy Body of our Lord. When I heard this, I wished her, if she desired right advice, to tell me the naked truth, whether she had more then once layn with that adulterer; and also, whether he knew that her Daughter N. was his, or no. She answered, that they had but once (she thanked God) committed that sin, and that they had both so much repented them of it, that if it could be, they would give any money it were undone. Neither could he possibly ever know that N. was his Daughter; because she for certain reasons had alwayes

wayes kept that secret to her self. I advised her therefore first, that she should find out, some way, whereby she might safely declare the whole matter to her Husband. To which she answered, that she durst in no wise do that. For, if my Husband (said she) should come to the knowledge of this, I am certain, that he would either kill the adulterer together with me, or else be killed by him; and so this thing would straight be spread abroad among the vulgar. Then said I, if you dare not attempt this Counsel; yet at least do this by all means; procure that your illigitimate Daughter be placed in some Monastery, and let her in no case have possession of any part of your Husbands estate, together with his true Heirs, to their dammage, and the eternal damnation of your Souls; for if she should inherit any part of your Husbands estate, she would possess it unlawfully. And you may tell your Husband, that you have devoted that Daughter to Religion, and be urgent with him, to suffer you to fulfil your Vow. Accordingly the woman did very oft endeavour it; and I backing her, tryed by many reasons to perswade her Husband; but all our endeavours were in vain. At last I again told her plainly, that if she would

would deliver her own Soul, she must find out some means, in the sweetest manner she could possibly, to declare the whole matter to her Husband; that so he might not take the business so heinously, as she fear'd; and this, before her Daughter be disposed of in marriage; that so at last she might be delivered from this dangerous and troublesome remorse of Conscience. But while she was too long in suspence; It fell out that the two Merchants, by the Mediation and counsel of Friends, made up a match between the ones Son, and the others supposed Daughter; but indeed between the Brother and Sister, who being thus incestuously joyned, wonderfully loved one the other When I beheld so great iniquity, out of pitty suffering with these miserable People; I tryed divers wayes, if by any means they might be seperated the one from the other. But when I saw I availed nothing, and that the fore-named Virgin N. was with child by her Brother, her Husband; and being called home by the commands of my Superiours; I counselled her, that had committed the first Sin and Adultery, that she should discover in confession her whole sorrow to one Brother N. a pious and learned man, and follow his advice. And so I departed.

But how unhappily these matters afterwards succeeded with them, (as that Brother wrote me word) I am hardly able to express. And truly, all this Story is of my own knowledge. Therefore how many probably may there be of Brothers and Sisters, and other near kindred, which I know nothing of, which may in other places be joyned together in Matrimony. Truly, I fear, that there is a certain Father (which verily is not fit to be spoken of) that doth commit Incest and Adultry with his own Daughter. Plainly (Beloved) it can not be spoken how many and grievous sins have their birth and original out of Luxury and Adultry. Take it for certain, that Adultry is an enormous crime and very odious to God. Therefore hath Hell enlarged it's mouth without bound. Believe me an Adulterer, or Adulteress is in a manner worse then a Thief or Robber. For a Thief, and a Robber do but take away a man's temporal Goods. But an Adulterer, or Adulteress, do commit a more heinous crime by committing Adultry. For God himself instituted Matrimony, and therefore it is properly His, and He himself doth so strongly joyn twain mutually together in all faithfulness, that they are called one Body, and ought not to be guilty of the least

leaſt unfaithfulneſs one to the other, ſince they have both vowed and promiſed to God, that they would conſtantly be faithful the one to the other. A Thief therefore (as I ſaid) and a Robber takes away a man's Goods. But an Adulterer and Adulteress incur the guilt of perjury. and therefore ſteal that which belongeth to God, and aſmuch as in them is, ſpoil and rob him. For certainly, ſacred Wedlock is ordained of God himſelf, that it might be his; and that men in much faithfulneſs and ſanctity might beget Children; to this end, that his Kingdom might be filled. Hence therefore now you your ſelves gather, whither Adultry be not far worſe then Theft and Rapine; when as Adulterers ſteal that, which is Gods: But Thieves & Robbers only take away what is mans. Wherefore (Beloved) beware of Adultry, becauſe it is a grievous and enormous wickedneſs. Truly. If I would go about to lay open all the dangers and evills ſpringing out of Adultry, this whole day would hardly ſuffice, and yet I fear I have already been to tedious. I ſhould now ſpeak of Pride, of covetous men, of Soldiers, & their Comrades, and Wives, of handy-crafts men, and their Wives; but the time doth not permit. Truly, I have yet many things,

which I shall say in their due time, except I be silenced from preaching. But I warn you beloved, let not any one hit another in the Teeth with these things which ye have heard, because I have only touched the vices of some. For we are all guilty and obnoxious to sin. But if there be any one here without Sin, let him first cast a stone at them, whom I have mentioned. Believe me, as things are with us at present, it doth exceedingly concern us, that with what speed possible, we should amend our lives. Otherwise except we so do; there are some among you, who may live till that time, wherein God Almighty may permit some grievous, and unusual distress, and pressure to happen to men. But arise now, and let us pray the Lords Prayer, and repeat the Angels salutation.

How after this Sermon, the Master was forbidden by his Brethren to Preach again.

AFter this Sermon, all the People of the City did talk much, and variously of the Matter; some praised him, some dispraised him: but the greater part did commend him, saying, He is certainly a good man, and

and devout towards God, who fears no man, but ſpeaks the very meer truth of himſelf, and all others. But his Brethren preſently after this Sermon, being met together in the Chapter-Room, unanimouſly concluded, that he ſhould be wholly ſilenced from Preaching: and they ſtudiouſly enough endeavoured to bring it about, that they might ſend him away to another Monaſtery of their Order. Which when the Rulers, and chief men of the City found out; they went to thoſe Monks, and intreated them to grant Licenſe to the Maſter again to Preach: and likewiſe inquired of them, what fault they found in him, that they ſhould prohibit him from preaching. Who anſwered, He hath offended our beſt friends, and turned them from us. To which the Lords ſaid, we believe that ye have no better Friends certainly in this City then we; who can better take care of your affairs, and be more helpful to you then we. Therefore we fear that ye rather take it ill, that he publickly reproved you. But he reproved us alſo, and yet we take it not ill. Truly, ye ought rather at any price to purchaſe ſuch a man, as he is; who dares ſpeak the Truth to men; and as it ought to be, fears not the face of any man. So therefore out of reſpect to the Lords, and

for their sakes, It was not only permitted to the Master, to remain there, but also to Preach again. Afterwards the Master was intreated by the secular men, to Preach again another publick Sermon to them. He told them, he would do as they desired, if the Lord gave him leave, the very next Lords day after the ninth. Now that Lords day was *Judica*, or the Passion of our Lord in *Lent*. And when the appointed day and hour was come, a very great multitude of common People came together; thither also came the Master, and thus began his Sermon.

The Masters second Sermon to the vulgar People.

THE Gospel for this present day, Beloved, is that, where the Lord saith to the multitudes, and to the chief Priests: *Who among you convinceth me of Sin? If I say the Truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God, heareth the Words of God; For this cause ye hear not, because ye are not of God.* This Gospel is long, and because I hope most of you have heard it of your Pastors to day; omitting it, I do make my Discourse so much the shorter. But before

fore I begin to obtain Grace, let us call upon the Mother of Mercy, and all Grace, saying *Ave Mary*, &c. Truly (Beloved) of right, when as to day, the Lords day after the Lords Passion is Celebrated, I ought to Preach of the Passion: but I have so many things to speak of, that that cannot be done at this time. For it is exceeding necessary, that we should be spoke to of our sins and failings. Nevertheless, if it may be commodiously done, I have purposed upon some convenient day this week, to Preach a Sermon of the venerable Sacrament; who namely have right to come unto it, and who not: and what it is hindreth them, who ought not to come. Afterwards also, I shall make a Sermon upon the most bitter Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. And indeed at this time, Beloved, I can say nothing to ye, unless I do speak of the Community by their several Names and Titles. Wherefore also I would have you take this advice, that if any be here, to whom my discourse shall not belong, let not them wrest it as spoken to them; neither let them judge them, to whom peradventure it shall belong; but give God thanks, that he hath preserved them from evil: But they, who shall understand themselves to be guilty, and whom my discourse

shall note, let them the more speedily repent, and amend their lives. For this will be exceedingly necessary for them to do. This common true saying is found in almost every man's mouth; when we say that *Adam* and *Eve* did exceeding wickedly, whilst they followed the Devil, and transgressed the Commandment of the Lord their God. But if any one rightly did weigh it, how many (do we think) would he find now a dayes entangled in more grievous sins, then *Adam* and *Eve* were? Certainly, every rash, and swaggering Soldier, and his proud, and lascivious Wife, do commit far more and greater evils, then *Adam* and *Eve* did. *Eve* indeed followed the Devil, and violated the Command of God. *Adam* also had respect to the Woman, and being willing to please her, he transgressed the precept of God. But presently for the violation of this one command, they were both driven out of Paradise: and in such a manner hath the wrath of Divine vengeance raged against them, and all their posterity; that from that time, for the space of five thousand years, it suffered none to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. And in the mean while *Adam* and *Eve*, were compelled so long in the Limbo of Hell, to wait in expectation, until that fullness

neſs of time came, wherein God the Father did vouchſafe to deliver them by his only begotten Son.

Truly (Beloved) I know that *Adam* and *Eve* never neglected, but this one command; neither have I found in Scripture that they committed any other grievous ſin. If therefore Almighty God hath ſo ſeverely & horribly revenged upon them this one ſin; there is no cauſe certainly, why theſe proud, immodeſt, and vain Women do diſcommend them for many things, and accuſe them of many crimes. For verily be certain of this; if theſe Women go on in thoſe courſes, and actions, in which at preſent they live: I know not what will become of them. For they not once only as *Eve* did, do tranſgreſs the Divine Commandment, but too too oft, in divers manners, at divers times, and ſeaſons. Wherefore ye proud, fooliſh, and raſh Women, repent at laſt, I beſeech you: eſpecially ſince ye know that the Lord of Majeſty, whom ye offend by your iniquities hath ſo grievouſly taken vengeance upon *Eve* for ſin; yea alſo, and doth yet daily even too ſeverely take vengeance; as ye in the pains and diſtreſſes of child-bearing learn by your own experience. Repent, Repent, I ſay, ye Women beloved in Chriſt. Otherwiſe except

ye

ye so do, certain it is ye lead too too dangerous a Life. And truly, it is a thing much to be bewailed, and a thing exceeding pernicious and dangerous, that we, who attend upon the hearing of confessions, should connive at such things in you, whereby we are exposed to as great danger as your selves. But your Husbands stand in greater danger, who imitate *Adam*, in indulging, conniving, and permitting you not once, but frequently to play the *Eves*. But hear me thou, who ever art such a Husband, such an *Adam*; Certainly, God hath not committed unto thee thy *Eve*, for this reason, that thou shouldest suffer her so oft to violate his commands: but rather for this cause hath he given her unto thee, that thou shouldest keep her, and take such care of her, as not to suffer her to neglect so much as one precept. But now thou dost very carefully regard her, who, when thou oughtest to hinder sin, art a helper of her to commit sin. But whilst you connive at those evils, which she committeth, you your self are not innocent, but are partaker of her sins, and so oft trangress the Divine Commandment. I exceedingly fear (Beloved) that at this time there may be found some Confessors, who fear not to administer the Holy Sacraments to very many,

many, both Men and Woman, whom notwithſtanding they know to lye in ſome mortal ſins. And moſt of theſe, as I fear, at the end of their lives, are drowned in the depths of diſpair, and ſo incur the miſeries of perpetual damnation. For the Devils are very buſie about ſuch like worldly men, when they come to dye. For they grievouſly ſet before them all the ſins, which ever they committed. And what heart, think ye, can thoſe wretches have then, when they have their whole life long been given to this fallacious World; and when the Devils are ſo exceeding ſubtile, and full of craft to deceive? Now therefore, dearly Beloved, if any of you know themſelves guilty in any of theſe things let them bluſh (I beſeech you) before God and Men, and make haſt to reform themſelves. For it is certain, that many Jews and Pagans are not a little ſcandalized at your lives. Yea, verily the Pagans, when they hear that Men and Women among us are cloathed ſo ſhamefully, and immodeſtly; they, as I have been informed by thoſe that heard them, ſay thus: Chriſtians probably are not true men, becauſe they go cloathed ſo like beaſts; but peradventure have ſomething in them of the nature of beaſts. And ye all know, that the

Jews

Jews dwell among us here in our Country: Who, when they hear (and they hear it but too often) how injuriouſly we treat God by our impious and horrible ſwearing; ſay, as it hath been told me by others, nay, and as I have heard my ſelf, when upon a time I ſpake with them concerning our Chriſtian Faith: they thus ſay. Can we believe that he is our God, whom you ſay is your God? Certainly, we are thus perſwaded, that if your God were of ſo great power; he would in no wiſe permit, nor ſuffer it to go unpuniſhed; that you oft do ſo impiouſly deal with him with wrathful minds, too oft ſwearing, and for-ſwearing: Doubtleſs if he were God, he would never bear it. Wherefore ye need not doubt, but ye unmeaſurably ſin, whoever give the reigns to your tongues thus impiouſly to ſwear. Believe me, God will not ſuffer this long to go unrevenged, but either here, or in the World to come, where ſins are too too bitterly puniſhed; will take vengeance on you for it. And you unchaſt Women, who wear ſo laſcivious and wicked habits, take it for certain, that the moſt pure and great God will ſpeedily puniſh terribly the wantonneſs of your Garments: for he will not long endure it. Where is now that honeſt, chaſt, modeſt, and well-ordered Con-

Converſation of yours? How hath the Devil robbed you ſo of it almoſt all? I fear, I fear truly, that God the juſt Judge will call you to a ſevere account for your impudent and ſinful manner of life. For he himſelf ſaith: If a Man look upon a Woman, or a Woman upon a Man, if one luſt after the other, he hath then committed Adultry in his heart; and now death is compleated, though yet the act be not done. Whither I pray ſhall a man turn his Eyes; where he may not behold you, O ye ſcornful Women? *Alas!* your condition on both ſides is too too dangerous. Ye are always blaming *Adam* and *Eve*, becauſe they broke one only Commandment; though they have for that tranſgreſſion ſuffered ſo many evils even to death, yea and after death: But it were better that inſtead of *Adam* and *Eve*, you did reprove & blame your ſelves; ſeeing it is to be feared, that ye have oftner by far tranſgreſſed the Commandments of God than they. But whereas in this Diſcourſe I have only mentioned Military men & their wives; let not therefore any one think, that I intended to mark only them. For truly, I would put to rebuke all what ever, both thoſe that are above, and thoſe that are below the rank of Soldiers; namely, Merchants and their Wives,

Wives, and in brief all those that are upon the fore-mentioned accompt blameable, of what rank or quality soever they be.

Again, it is not a little to be feared, Beloved, that there are many to be found who are reputed Christians, & yet so live, as that if they should depart out of this world in that their evil life, they would find it worse with them, than with the Jewes. For the Jewes know no other, but that they may Lawfully practise Usury, to get their living. But it is not at all hidden to Christians, that it is sinful and unlawful to practise Usury; and yet notwithstanding they do it. Therefore they will be thrust below the Jews in Hell. *And* here I would have all those in like manner to be understood, who before God are Usurers, and yet would not be accompted, nor called so by men. *And* lastly, I here note all those, who practice unjust morgaging, and hunt for unlawful gains from monyes. I remember truly, that I lived in such a time, when it was exceeding rare, and unusual to use morgaging, and few at that time did practise it. *And* if then any contracts were made with the condition of Re-emption, they were sincere and simple, and according to God; so that I my self also did permit some to make such contracts. But I will tell you upon

upon what accompt I did it. There came at that time to me certain honeſt men, one of whom ſaid unto me: how do you advice me Sir? I have bought of this man ſome certain Rents for my money upon his inheritance. He alſo is come to me beſeeching me for Gods ſake to do this thing for him; to permit, that writings be made, that may contain this condition, that if God enable him to redeem his eſtate, I would permit him for Gods ſake ſo to do. Having heard this, I thus ſaid to the man: tell me prethee, doſt thou eye or intend nothing elſe in this matter, but only to do this purely for Gods ſake? To which he anſwered, Truly, nothing elſe do I mind in this buſineſs. For what elſe ſhould I ſeek, or what elſe ſhould move me, but only that it pitties me that this mans eſtate ſhould be for ever made over to me and my Heirs? otherwiſe I had rather poſſeſs the Goods as my own, according as I purchaſed them. In this manner, Beloved, I ſometimes heretofore conſented to redemptions; but take notice I beſeech you, how purely, how ſimply, and according to God, heretofore this was done. But now in theſe our times, we do by our pride and covetouſneſs, ſo pervert, and corrupt theſe redemptions, that for the moſt part they are more

more then half Usury before God: the blame of which is almost mostly ours, who are Confessors, because we permit such things. Behold, I will tell you, Beloved, into what great misery in this age we are slidden. Not very long ago, there happened a certain Citizen to come to me, and said to me: I beseech you Sir, give me some advice in a business, which I shall declare to you. Behold, I, and my Wife, and my Sons have not sufficient where withal to maintain us according to the fashion of this age. And therefore I have thoughts to sell my estate upon condition of re-emption: but I would do nothing in it without your advice. If therefore you so advice me, I fully purpose so to do. I made him this answer, I will not in the least advice you to it; but rather disswade you by all means I can faithfully and sincerely. He answered me, I have not then wherewithal to live according to the custome of these times. To which I answered, Take it for certain, if you follow that course, you have told me, you will grievously offend God, and will commit some mortal sins. For I would not have you ignorant that all contracts of buying and selling Rents, or Possessions, in which the buyer reserves power to himself, ever to call in again,

again, when he pleaſeth the principal ſum; (all ſuch contracts I ſay) are not free from uſury: for in all thoſe contracts, in which upon loan any gain is expected, by covenant or principal intention explicitly, with what colour ſoever; notwithſtanding many endeavour now a dayes to excuſe it: in all thoſe contracts, I ſay, for the moſt part, there is a mixture of uſury. So therefore; firſt, you will make your ſelf partaker of anothers uſury, if without preſſing neceſſity you make uſe of a common Uſurer; or elſe you draw your neighbour, who before uſed it not, to practiſe uſury. Secondly, you incur the guilt of avarice, (which is one of the ſeven capital ſins) whileſt that moves you to do this. Thirdly, alſo you will ſin by pride, whilſt you do this: for this end, that you, and your wife, and your children, may be conformable to the luxury and pomp of the Age, and be like to others. Wherefore, for theſe reaſons, I dare by no means adviſe you to it; but rather, with what faithfulneſs I can, I give you this counſel, That you live contented with your lot, and with thoſe goods which God hath granted you, after the manner of ancient time; and be thankfull to God, who doubtleſs will ſuccour you ſo doing, that you ſhall have what is ſufficient

for you. Certainly, if you acquieſce in this my counſel, and do as I tell you, you ſhall perceive it will be profitable to you, both for body and ſoul. Then ſaid he, I give you thanks, Reverend Sir, for this wholſome counſel, which you have beſtowed on me, which I fully determine to follow, and let paſſe that which I had thought to do. See now Beloved, whither we are fallen. Afterwards I perceived that the ſame honeſt man, the ſame year went to a certain other Doctor, who permitted it him, as lawfull: ſo that he ſold all his Eſtate under the forementioned doubtfull condition of Redemption. Plainly 'tis we make for you the way too broad; and yet in truth it is not ſo; but ſtrait is the Matth. 7. way which leadeth to life. Alas, which is never enough to be bewailed, things are come to that paſſe now a dayes, that there are few affairs among Chriſtian People, which are wholly juſt and ſincere. Alas for grief, how many blinde guides are to be found at this day? And if the blind tumble upon the blind into Hell, both their conditions will be ſo much the worſe. Wherefore, Beloved, it very much concerns you to look to your ſelves: for I fear that the friendſhip of the men of this world, is too dear to many of us *Confeſſors*. I will tell you ſomething of my ſelf,

ſelf, and I'le ſpeak the ſimple truth; but I beſeech you let no man be ſcandalized thereat. At a certain time it came very importunatly into my mind, that I muſt go beyond the Seas, and expoſe my body to the dangers of death, and muſt preach the Word of God to the Pagans, and try, if by God's help I might be able to convert any of them to the Faith of Chriſt. This will increaſed in me, and waxed ſo ſtrong, that I were now reſolved even to prepare me for the journey, and did think with my ſelf of the manner, how I might come thither. And when I were carefully taken up with this matter, it fell out on a certain morning, that when I had returned to bed, and was now fallen aſleep, me thought I heard one ſpeaking to me theſe words: Whither do you intend your journey? There is no need to paſs the Seas to Pagans, for you ſhall find many of them here among Chriſtians, who whilſt they bear the Name of Chriſt, live worſe than Heathens. When therefore you have preached ſo long to theſe, till they attain to a true life, and a life worthy of a Chriſtian; then at laſt take free leave to paſs to the Saracens. This admonition was given me in my ſleep three times, and alwayes in the ſame form of words: from whence it came to paſſe, that

I recalled my mind from contriving to passe the Seas.

Hence now something should be spoken of the Merchants, but I fear that I am too tedious. Notwithstanding I will speak a few words concerning them. There are some Merchants now a dayes, who do get their estates by very unjust wayes, and such as are exceeding contrary to God, and that by so various and diverse *unjust means*, that I cannot here relate them all. But be sure of it ye Merchants, whereas ye sell any thing, in what Country soever, the dearer, because of time respited for payment, (*dearer I say*) than otherwise you would have done, if the buyer had paid you ready money; whatever you receive in this case above the just price, all that extends to usury before God, seeing ye extort that from your neighbours. The same is to be thought, whilst you exchange your money, assign, or lend it for a certain term; which when it cometh, ye know what gain is to be allowed you out of every hundred crowns, as for your Interest (as you call it) because of the dammage which ye pretend to receive by the forbearance; in the mean time concealing the word Usury. Alas, what end I pray will there be of your covetousness? If ye will be wise Merchants, why do

ye

ye not rather get eternal riches, by making to your ſelves friends of the mammon of iniquity, to wit, the poor, whoſe is the Kingdom of Heaven, of whom ye may hold it, and into which rich men ſhall not enter, without works of mercy? *Wo unto you* (ſaith the Prophet) *which gather together thoſe things which are not your own. How long will ye heap up againſt your ſelves thick clay?* In the mean time indeed, you and your Confeſſions may cover over theſe things with a cloak in this world, and defend them by ſome falſe comments; yet they will not therfore be juſt before God. But when we come into eternity, there every covering will be taken away, and what ever ſhall be unjuſt, will appear to all clearer than the light.

Luk. 16.

Hab. 2.

But to be briefer, look upon your own ſelves, I beſeech you, ye dealers in the world (for this is chiefly neceſſary for you) and take heed to your ſelves; for very many times in your buying and ſelling ye tell lies, and impoſe upon your neighbour, sby certain ſubtile gloſſes and equivocating words. How ye ſpend alſo Feaſtival days, which ye ought to have in reverence, and obſerve, ye beſt know. Finally, how many cuſtoms and willwayes are now riſen up, ye are not at all ignorant. Furthermore, all theſe things, we,

who receive your confeſſions, ought to reprove: but alas, many of us do diſſemble more than is fitting, and wickedly tolerate you. Truly I fear, that ſome of us receive ſometimes ſome preſents from you, and becauſe of them permit and ſuffer you to heap and keep together by any manner of means, as much as would ſuffice an hundred to live on. Which goods, though they ſhould be juſtly got, yet you ought nevertheleſs to relieve thoſe that want out of them, for to that
Luk. 16. end were they conferred upon you by God. Verily that rich man who was cloathed in purple and ſilks, and fared ſumptuouſly every day; when he was dead, he was buried in Hell, for this cauſe doubtleſs, becauſe he kept to himſelf the goods granted to him by God, and uſed them according to the luſt of his nature. And although we read of nothing that he unjuſtly poſſeſſed, or that he took by violence any other mans goods; yet he was compelled to undergo the endleſs torments of Hell. Hear now ye Merchants, behold your ſelves I beſeech you, and examine your ſelves: For hardly, as I truly judge, can it be, but where ye gain ſuch great ſums of money, and ſo much ſuperfluous goods, but that ye poſſeſs the ſame with Pride and Covetouſneſs; yea, and with many other great

great ſins, which uſually for the moſt part mingle herewith; Which you your ſelves would plainly diſcover, if it were not irkſom to you rightly to ſearch into, and examine the matter. Here by the way, Ile tell you, Beloved, what befell me within theſe five years, if I rightly remember. There came to me a certain Merchant, a very rich man, and entred familiarly into diſcourſe with me, andamong other things told me, that there were due to him in a certain forreign Country, very much, and very great Commodities. I required of him, how it came to paſſe that ſo much was owing to him in a forreign Country? He anſwered, that his Wares were there ſold, and delivered to Chapmen, and that they owed him ſo much. Again, replied I, tell me the truth; if any one would have bought of you thoſe Commodities at ſomewhat a lower price, but yet with ready money, would you have let him had them? Yes, doubtleſs, anſwered he, I would have let him had them, and had rather have had it ſo; that with ready money I might have bought other Commodities. I replied and ſaid, be ſure therefore whatever you receive for reſpiting of time, more than you would have taken in ready money, all that is unjuſt. And although it hath not got the name

of Uſury among men, yet ſo it is called before the right and juſt judgment of God. Contrarily, replied he, It is otherwiſe; for this is the manner and cuſtom of all Countries to do ſo. I anſwered him, That matters not, neither is it therefore juſt and equal; for you make ſuch will-cuſtoms, and naughty inventions, and have made them; and therefore it is the worſe. Will ye make cuſtoms, which are contrary to God, a Law? it will therefore alſo be a cuſtom to deſcend into Hell. Wherefore, as I ſaid before, take it for certain, if you any where whatever, or in any Country whatever, ſell any thing dearer, becauſe of time given for payment, than you would have done if they had paid ready money; or, if you get gain for money lent, becauſe of time given for payment; whatever you thus receive, it is all to be reckoned among unjuſt and ill-gotten goods; and therefore alſo muſt be reſtored to them from whom it was received, if ever you will be ſaved. When he heard this, he ſaid unto me, Truly you are a hard man: my Confeſſor alwayes permitted me this thing. I anſwered, Your Confeſſor peradventure took your money, and permitted you that, which God himſelf with all his Omnipotency cannot permit you. See here, Beloved, how per-

pernicious a thing Covetouſneſs is. That rich Merchant thus went from me, not ſo much as in word teſtifying any purpoſe ever of amending his life. Believe me Beloved, itis above all things neceſſary for us all from our hearts to amend our ſelves, and to reform our evil lives: for we live in too too perilous times; and it is to be feared that yet more perilous times are at hand. But what ſhall I ſay, when as it is told me, there are not wanting ſome who do blame me, as if I did preach too rigidly and ſeverely? But I doubt not conſtantly to affirm, that there is not one of all theſe ſtanding here before me, who would not preach much more ſeverely than I do, if ſo be he had experienced what I have; and that it lay upon him as his duty ordinarily to preach, as it doth on me. And if it would not be too tedious to you, I would tell you ſome things, which would be not a little congruous to this place, and would be profitable for you to hear it. *Then very many of the People altogether with one voice ſaid, Speak aſſuredly Sir, for you ſhall find us patient and benevolous hearers.* I rehearſe therefore unto you, Beloved, a thing that befell my ſelf. Upon a certain time I ſat alone in a Cell, and when I had began to think of the wonderfull things

things of God, and how ſtrange the ſtate of the Church was at this time, how all good order was too much neglected, and went to rack. In the midſt of theſe meditations, I heard a certain voice with my bodily ears, ſpeaking to me, although I ſaw no body at all.

But after this manner it ſpake: Ariſe, now you muſt experience ſome things, whereby you may be enabled ſo much the more certainly to ſpeak the truth openly to your neighbours. And at this laſt word I were deprived of all my ſenſual diſcerning, and being taken into an extaſie, I was in that very rapture permitted to ſee into Purgatory; where I beheld the torments of multitudes of men, (many of which I knew) ſo painfull, and ſo intolerably bitter, and ſo immenſe puniſhments, and ſorrows ſo intenſe, and fearfull, that no reaſon, no underſtanding is ſufficient to expreſs them. In brief, take it for certain, that I beheld there ſo many, ſo various and divers kinds of torments, in a wonderfull manner painfull, that ſuch a terrour and trembling hath ſeized upon me, that all the natural joyes of this life can in no wiſe make me merry; and if I ſhould live yet an hundred years, I think I ſhould never be merry, except God ſhould make me

me ſo by ſome ſupernatural means. But I beſeech you, Beloved, let not any be offended at this, that I would relate ſuch things as theſe are unto you. Truly I fear, that ſome peradventure do think, that in divulging theſe things, I ſeek glory to my ſelf. But let me aſſure you, I ſeek or wiſh the praiſe of no man, nay nor the wealth of any one for this reaſon: for I am abundantly contented with thoſe things, which in our Monaſtery, according to the cuſtom of the Covent are provided for me: Nay, I am never without fear, leſt peradventure I ſhould take that which is ſuperfluous, of thoſe things, which are ſet before me in our Hall. And certainly I believe that there is not one here preſent, who, if he had ſeen and experienced thoſe things, which I have ſeen and experienced, namely, ſuch horrible and fearfull puniſhments, but would peradventvre have been better contented with a ſmall proviſion and allowance, than I am. Therefore let none of you be ſcandalized at my words fore-ſpoken. In good earneſt I find no other cauſe why God would have me to ſee ſuch things, but becauſe of my ſins and iniquities, that I might both reform my ſelf, and the more boldly ſpeak to others the truth, which I have certainly known; and

in no wiſe flatter their wickedneſſes and ſins. And hence, if I were ſure for this cauſe to be put to death, I ſhould nevertheleſs ſpeak the naked and ſimple truth. Truly, I ſaw ſome in thoſe moſt vehement pains, and was taken with extream admiration, that they ſhould deſire to remain ſo long, in ſo great anguiſh, ſith ſome of them had departed this life many years before, who, whilſt they lived, I did believe were both good and pious; and yet they did undergo in thoſe places of Purgatory ſo great and ineffable puniſhments, that no man can in this life ponder or underſtand them, as they deſerve. Wherefore this, I from my heart do counſel all, that we ſlight not Purgatoty; but be ſpeedily converted, and ſeriouſly reform our ſelves. Certainly if you did know, how above meaſure valuable and profitable the preſent time is, you would not eſteem it ſo little, nor ſuffer it to paſſe away ſo fooliſhly; for truly, when we are brought out of this tranſitory time, into things future and eternal, there exceeding ſpeedy, ſimple, right and rigid judgment paſſeth upon thoſe, who ſuffer this preſent time fooliſhly to paſs away. But what ſhall I ſay, Beloved? for if I attempt to ſpeak any thing to you of divine Juſtice, that is ſo immeaſurable, ſtrict,

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and rigid, that I fear ſome of you may take occaſion of deſpair from hence: If contrariwiſe I would diſcourſe of his infinit mercy, how ready he is to ſhew it to all in this life: I fear on the other hand ſome would preſume ſo upon it, that they would live worſe and more fooliſhly, and ſo may admit of ſome ſuch ſin, as (it were to be feared) God would not pardon either here or hereafter. I fear truly, Beloved, leſt I have been too tedious, althongh many things yet remain to be ſpoken of divers ſorts of men, and divers affairs; becauſe that we have gone too far aſtray from the right way. And in truth if I did, laying aſide all things elſe, attend only the duty of Preaching for this whole year, I think I could in no wiſe ſufficiently lay open all our defects and ſins. But when the Lord ſhall order it, I will further ſpeak of this matter. Ariſe now, and ſay the Lords Prayer, with the Angels Salutation.

After theſe things, it fell out on a certain time, that the Maſter made a journey to a certain Incluſory, in which there abode five Incluſis, which earneſtly entreated him, to preach to them a Sermon of the true and perfect ſecluſe life. To whom he ſaid, that he would willingly do what they deſired, if the Lord ſo ordered it, upon the Lords day

next

next following. When therefore that Lords-day was come, there came together to that place a multitude of men, and the Maſter began his Sermon thus.

The following Sermon was preached upon the Lords day of Sexageſima; *the ſubject of it was this: namely, Why St.* Paul *kept in ſilence his Rapture into the third Heaven ſo many years: That the Gifts of God come by afflictions, or at leaſt are confirmed by afflictions. Of a twofold Self-denial, one of Nature, the other of the Spirit. Laſtly, What belongs to a true Incluſe.*

I knew a man in Chriſt above forty years ago, &c. 2 *Cor.* 12. 2.

SAint *Paul*, Beloved, hath delivered unto us in his Epiſtles to day a wholſom and neceſſary inſtruction. But becauſe the ſaid Epiſtle is too long, I will not rehearſe to you all of it, but only part of it. The Apoſtle therefore ſaith, ſpeaking of himſelf, *I knew a man in Chriſt above fourteen years ſince*, ſuch a one (*whether in the body, or out of the body, I know not, God knoweth*) *taken*

taken up even into the third Heaven. Here my Beloved, take notice, I beſeech you, how the holy Apoſtle kept in ſilence this his Rapture, for full fourteen years together, neither would he bring it forth in publick until it was permitted him ſo to do by God. He did not certainly, as ſome men now a dayes, who, when they receive peradventure ſome ſmall grace from God, inſtantly break forth, and tell it others without the permiſſion of God, and declare it ſometimes to ſuch men, as do as little underſtand therby, what it is, or whither it tends, as themſelves; whereby alſo very many times it comes to paſſe, that ſuch Grace is taken away from ſuch like Bablers, and given to another more illuminated. Therefore ſee, my Beloved, that without the permiſſion of God, ye never divulge the gifts, which are conferred upon you by him, being ſure that few are to be found now a dayes, who are endowed with illuminated reaſon or diſcretion. And therefore heed is to be taken that the gifts of God be not brought forth ſuddenly, and without his licence. Now that it was permitted to S. *Paul* by God, to ſpeak of thoſe things which had hapned to him, it was permitted by God for our warning and neceſſary inſtruction; namely, that if it ſhould

Againſt raſh bablers of their viſions.

ſhould happen that he ſhould infuſe into any one of us his preventing grace, winhout any merit precedent; ſuch a one ſhould not afterwards be ſhaken with terrour, if he ſuffer him to be afflicted, even as it uſually befell bleſſed *Paul*. Yes verily, it is to be taken for certain, that the gifts of God come by afflictions: but if they come before afflictions, certain it is that yet they ought to be confirmed and proved by afflictions. When as therefore it is a matter of ſo much nobleneſs and profit to endure adverſity; for that reaſon the Almighty God hath ſuffered ſo heavie afflictions to meet with all his beloved Saints; and for the ſame cauſe he gave leave to the bleſſed Apoſtle to relate to us his afflictions: for he ſaith in this ſame Epiſtle; *Are they the Miniſters of Chriſt?* 2 Cor. 11 *I ſpeak as a fool, I more: In very many labours, in priſons more abundantly, in ſtripes above meaſure; in deaths frequently: five times of the Jews received I forty ſtripes but one: Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I ſtoned, thrice I ſuffered ſhipwrack; a night and a day I was in the depth of the ſea; in journies often, in dangers of rivers, in dangers of robbers, in dangers from my kinred, in dangers from the nations, in dangers in the city, in dangers*

To whom the gifts of God do come.

gers in the deſarts, in dangers in the ſea, in dangers among falſe brethren, in labour and toil, in watchings, in hunger and thirſt, in much faſting, in cold and nakedneſs, &c. Theſe and many other things the bleſſed Apoſtle commemorates in this dayes Epiſtle, by him to have been endured; in reciting of each of which, leſt I ſhould be the more tedious, I will adde only this one, which among the reſt he adjoyns, ſaying, *Leſt the Greatneſs of Revelations ſhould lift me up, there was given me a prick of my fleſh, the Angel of Satan, who might buffet me: Becauſe of which I beſought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me: and he anſwered me, My Grace* (Paul) *is ſufficient for thee: for ſtrength is perfected in weakneſs. Willingly therefore* (ſaith he) *will I glory in my infirmities, that the vertue of Chriſt may dwell in me.* 2 Cor. 12.

Now therfore, Beloved, after that St. *Paul*, a veſſel of Election, hath in this his Epiſtle abundantly proved unto us, how great the profit of Afflictions is; truly it deſerves, that we ſhould give credit to ſo great an Apoſtle, and imitate and follow him. Yea, truly, it cannot be, that ever we ſhould attain to a praiſe-worthy and fruitful life, except we willingly renounce the pleaſures of Nature.

What it is to renounce Nature.

Becauſe to renounce Nature, is nothing elſe but voluntarily to refuſe and deny all things in which Nature is delighted; thoſe things only excepted, which upon a rational account are neceſſary to the ſuſtentation of Nature; which ſhall be ſuch things as may be helpful to us in the ſervice of God, and in the coming to God: all other things are to be forſaken for God's ſake. Neither indeed can any one experience, or receive the ſuperiour ſweetneſs of God, except he bid *adeu* to the ſweetneſs of fading things, and to the inclination and pleaſure of the ſenſes. And hence the Apoſtle ſaith, *If ye will live after the fleſh, ye ſhall die: but if by the Spirit ye ſhall mortifie the deeds of the fleſh, ye ſhall live.* Here let us contemplate, and (to the utmoſt of our power) follow the every way lovely example of our Lord and Saviour, ſo as the ſame Apoſtle doth admoniſh: *Put off* (ſaith he) *the old man, and put on our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

Rom. 8.

Rom. 13.

And furthermore, there is yet another much more noble and excellent Self-denial, than that is by which we deny Nature; and that is, when willingly we renounce the Spirit; which how it is done, I would have you mark. After that the Spirit hath wholly tamed the fleſh, and reduced it to obedience,

Epheſ. 4.

ence, and now is climed above all caducal and ſlippery things; then it taketh, as it were, a leap into everlaſting good things themſelves, which doubtleſs are much more delightfull to it, both in taſt and fruition, than natural delights were before. When therefore any one cometh to taſt, and enjoy thoſe excellent higheſt goods, he ought then no leſſe to renounce thoſe delights and affluences of Spirit, than before he was fain to do thoſe of Nature; ſo as he may know how to leave to God his gifts and operations, according to his will and pleaſure. This Renunciation alſo is not a little difficult at the beginning, to them who have taſted God according to the deliciouſneſs of Spirit. This ſame Renunciation is called *Poverty of Spirit*, of which the Lord ſpeaketh, ſaying, *Bleſſed are the Poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* Yea verily, oft-times it falls out that ſome come to that paſſe, that they exceeding ſubtilly ſnatch and draw what ever ſhineth and ſavoureth in them, to themſelves, into their ground, into their will and arbitrement, neither leave themſelves to God by way of mortification: But whoever are thus, they doubtleſs uſe the grace and gifts of God too too unfruitfully; the reaſon of which is, that when it is not hidden to God, that unleſs he

infuſe into them light and ſavour, they will quickly depart from him; therefore he retains them with ſome ſweet leſſer comforts, leſt they ſhould altogether forſake him; Such like men are as yet exceeding frail & weak; becauſe they are ſuch as are full of ſelf-will, and love and imbrace the ſhadow inſtead of the thing it ſelf: who have alſo this fault, That though they are moſtly outward and external, yet they think themſelves after a manner to be of us: but they are too much deceived in their opinion.

Furthermore, they that from the bottom or ground, reſign and offer themſelves to God, and who do receive from him ſweet and bitter alike; who, laſtly, though the influence of light and ſavour be withdrawn from them, do not in any wiſe therefore depart from God; theſe are the true internal ones.

Verily, whoever after this manner, now ſpoken of, have denied themſelves, and with a willing mind have penetrated through the ſweetneſſes, aſwell of Spirit as of Nature, and have got above them; theſe certainly have made a profitable and fruitful thorow progreſs, and have penetrated through more than can be ſpoken. But afterwards ſuch have need of very much vigilancy and watchfulneſs,

neſs, whereby alwayes they muſt diligently obſerve themſelves be circumſpect and careful that they may ever perſevere in very great humility: For their helliſh enemies ceaſe not then, but continually endeavour by all means they can to draw them back.

Believe me, Beloved, profound reſignation, and voluntary denial of our ſelves through our whole nature, is a certain good beginning, if ſo be it be joyned with true humility: Even as St. *Peter* ſaith, *Dearly Beloved, humble your ſelves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in the time of viſitation.* And, O that we could learn, how we might attain to true ſubjection of ſpirit in profound humility, that when God doth withdraw from us ſenſible Grace, we may be able eaſily to reſign it to him, and to reſtrain our appetite or deſire, ſo as not willingly to cover it. This is that which St. *Dionyſius* ſaith, When God makes his abode ſenſibly in my ſoul, I am filled with ſuch joy, and it is ſo well with me, that if he ſhould beſtow upon me ſuch authority, that all creatures that very hour ſhould no leſſe obey me than himſelf, it would not go ſo wel with me, as it doth by his preſence only: But when his ſenſible preſence is withdrawn from me, (I confeſs) then ſome deſire of it layes hold

on me: But when that happens to me, my weakneſs ſurely is the cauſe of it; Seeing *Solomon* ſaith, that in all the Works of God we ought to have reſt and peace. Behold that breathing and languiſhing deſire holy *Dionyſius* accounts his weakneſs: Why ſo? but becauſe the holy man clearly underſtood that himſelf was not as yet fully reſigned to God, when as he ſo deſired the preſence of God; ſeeing it is the greateſt reſignation, to reſign our ſelves to deſertion, and in all manner of deſertion to be reſigned: Which thing doth chiefly belong to them, who have deliciouſly experienced the ſweetneſs of God.

It behoveth us truly, Beloved, ſo manfully to ſtrive, that we may be made ſo prudent in God, that we may be able, having divine aſſiſtance, to tranſcend and penetrate all creatures, untill we attain unto God himſelf. There now we are taught in the Holy Ghoſt to tread upon, by our reaſon, and get above all natural things, that we may be able with St. *Auguſtine*, to ſay, *All creatures are unto us an high-way unto God*. So as what ever we happen to ſee or hear, of what nature ſoever it be, we may have the skill to bend all to our own uſe, and turn it to the beſt, and to draw ſome good out of it. Certainly a Chriſtian ought by his reaſon ſo oft and ſo humbly

humbly to exerciſe himſelf, and ſo often to penetrate all creatures, until he hath loſt all created things; and he ſhould ſo ſtrongly and manfully, and that not once, but many times, abſtract himſelf from all things, until he find God alone the joy of his ſoul, and the beloved of his heart; of whom the bleſſed Apoſtle ſpeaks, when he ſaith, *Who adhereth to God, is one Spirit.* 1 Cor. 6. In which tranſformation, the ſpirit of ſuch a one is tranſformed, and is made one with the one. If any one in this matter would venture himſelf, and perfectly renounce both himſelf and all creatures, he ſurely would by Gods help, or by the power of God, overcome all things; which thing *Paul* witneſſeth, where he ſaith, *I can do all things in him that ſtrengthneth me.* Philip. 4.

Go to now, Beloved, make ſpeed, be doing, haſten, learn to live, being alſo ſure that a man may in this preſent time attain to that condition, that he may experience ſo immenſe ſupernatural joy, ſuch as all creatures cannot afford even until Dooms-day.

Laſtly, Come on then, and let us all endeavour to learn, by what means we may be made true Worſhippers, *worſhipping the Father in Spirit and Truth.* John 4. But I fear leſt I am too tedious, ſith thoſe Incluſes have entreated

treated me, that I would declare unto them, what is the duty of a true Incluſe: And now this I ſhall diſpatch in a few words, and will tell what manner of one every true Incluſe ought to be: It belongs therefore to every Incluſe, that ſhe be ſimple, and both in mind and body, that is, both inwardly and outwardly to be an Incluſe. It doth not become her to look out at the windows, and be inquiſitive what is, or what hath been tranſacted here or there; it is meet that ſhe ſhould lead ſo pure, ſo abſtracted a life, that if ſhe ſhould pour forth prayers for all the Souls that are detained in places of Purgatory; ſhe may be found worthy, ſufficient, and able to free them all from thence. Truly an Incluſory life, is no ſmall matter: It behoveth plainly an Incluſe, ſo ſincerely and purely to live, that ſhe may be able to obtain all that of God, which the Univerſal holy Church, by the ſeven-fold grace of the Holy Ghoſt, doth obtain: If ſhe do otherwiſe, ſhe is not a true Incluſe. She ought alſo to lead ſuch a life, that if all Eccleſiaſtical Laws were taken away, it might not at all prejudice her to God-ward: But alas! things are now come to that paſs, that Incluſes entertain Gueſts in the evening, and in the morning adminiſter to them many things;

What the Duty of Incluſis is

The corrupt ſtate of Incluſes.

things: whith is not the Office of Incluſes, but of Hoſpitallers.

And moreover, it belongs to an Incluſe, diligently to obſerve ſilence, except only upon reaſonable and real neceſſity; as alſo purely and earneſtly to pray. It belongs not to her to perform the office of an Hoſpitaller, and to diſcourſe with men; but this rather is her duty, that ſhe perpetually perſiſt ſo reſolutely and immovably in true and divine reſignation, that ſhe may be able, even with a ſenſible delight, and joyful conſent, alwaies to wait the ſenſible preſence of God, and nevertheleſs perſevere faithful unto him, and therewith to renounce all creatures for his ſake. *Incluſes muſt keep ſilence.*

But now you may hear ſome Incluſes ſay, That it is their duty to exerciſe themſelves in vertues towards their neighbours; but ſuch ought to have betaken themſelves not to an Incluſory, but to an Hoſpital rather, and there humbly exerciſe themſelves about the Members of Chriſt, which then had properly belonged to them as their office; for this they ought faithfully to do, who live in Hoſpitals. *To whom it belongs to ſerve the Poor.*

Again, others ſay, I muſt ſerve and ſuccour my neighbours for God's ſake. But neither is this the duty of a true Incluſe: for if

if ſhe would more narrowly look into it, ſhe would ſurely finde, how that ſecretly it doth fight againſt her purpoſe. Every true Inlcuſe ought to lead ſo pure, ſo abſolute a life, ſo free and ſo abſtracted from all creatures, that her merits may be able to ſuccour and help all univerſally, that are inrolled under the Name of Chriſt.

But yet there are others, which ſay they are of ſo weak and frail a nature, that it is neceſſary for them, that they ſhould relieve themſelves, by diſcourſing with men, and by that means ſuccour their infirmity. O ſuch miſerable Incluſes! how wholly are they deceived by the counſel of the malignant one? Take it for certain, Beloved, whoever ſeeks any thing elſe in an Incluſory, than for Gods ſake willingly to ſuffer, ſuch a one doth unadviſedly betake her ſelf thereto.

Now ſome may be found, who enter into an Incluſory, that in it they may be fed by Alms with peace and eaſe; which Alms notwithſtanding they would but very unwillingly beg as exiles, in a deſpicable manner openly in the ſtreets: but as many as are after this manner, do raſhly take to themſelves the name of Incluſes (*alias* pure Nuns:) and it would be much better for their ſouls, that they ſhould lie as Exiles in the

the high-way, in ſuch a plight as might move the minds of all paſſengers to pitty. But when any Incluſe enters into an Incluſory, ſhe ought to offer her ſelf purely, freely, nakedly, and voluntarily to Chriſt, for to undergo the Croſſe for all men; bearing in mind thoſe words, which Chriſt ſpake upon the Croſſe, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Mat. 27. That bleſſed and venerable *Mary Magdalen*, was a true Incluſe; ſeeing ſhe of her own accord renounced all the comfort of creatures. Certainly, God the Father Almighty ſent his Son unto the Earth, and would have him take upon him humane nature, that in it he might ſuffer; and yet notwithſtanding we alwayes flie ſuffering. But whatever we can do, it is moſt certain, if we will take the nearer way, and ſooner, and more ſubtily penetrate all things; that cannot otherwiſe be done, than by following the moſt true Example of our Lord and Saviour, by ſuffering at leaſt in ſome meaſure.

And nevertheleſs, which here I bring for our comfort: Truly God the heavenly Father is not ſo hard and ſevere towards us, as he hath been towards his only Son. For verily, if we with our whole ſtrength offer our ſelves to God for to ſuffer, ſo as that we

we become willing of our own accord, and freely to undergo, whatever pleaseth him we should bear, neither in the time of affliction depart from him, neither do fly from afflictions when they meet us: When he shall take notice of this, he will the more speedily, when he shall see time, take away from us all afflictions, and will fill us with his divine and supernatural, pleasant and sensible consolation; which truly to whomsoever it happens, namely that he experience in himself this festival and pleasant Solemnity, such a one afterwards relishes no earthly festival. He is not made joyful like common men at the solemnity of a Masse, nor at the feast of *Easter*, or of *Penticost*, nor finally at any other feast. This huge internal feast only, namely, whilst the Omnipotent God cometh unto him with his supernatural and present Grace in Jubilee and Triumph; this inward feast (I say) doth fill him with abundant joy. And that at what time of the year soever it be transacted in him, at the same time all the aforesaid Solemnities and Festivals are together celebrated and fulfilled. Wherefore (dearly Beloved) we ought willingly to bear whatever adversity shall happen unto us: for whoever he be that doth by sufferings attain to this supernatural

natural and pleaſant Solemnity, this man becomes thereby exceeding prudent, eſſential, and well compoſed, and obtaineth ſo great a wiſdom by the influence of the Holy Ghoſt, that he doth abundantly underſtand what belongs to him to do, and what to leave undone. Then certainly all his in him are made fruitful, yet he then hath nothing at all of himſelf: but alwayes perſevering in great humility, ſuppoſeth himſelf an unprofitable ſervant, and evermore keepeth himſelf in a certain filial and amorous fear; neither feareth any thing elſe, but leſt he ſhould not fully ſatisfie the beloved of his heart, his moſt loving Father. In this ſtate, (that is) when he attaineth thus far, all his own private inſtitutions, and cuſtoms of his own will, that is, ſuch as are taken up of himſelf, fall off, and his converſation becometh ſimply, truly Chriſtian, and erect to heavenly things. In the mean time, he is nevertheleſs unknown to all men, except one of the ſame life, who hath experienced the ſame grace, and ſolemnity.

God Almighty grant, that we may learn by afflictions to endure, and by ſufferings, merit to attain unto this ſupernatural, joyful and happy ſolemnity, the eternal Truth it ſelf, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt bringing us to

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it, who, with the Father and Holy Ghoſt, liveth and reigneth, one God, throughout all Ages of Ages. *Amen.*

Three certain excellent Inſtitutions.

WHoſoever thou art who at any time haſt a deſire to attain unto God, and unto the moſt excellent ſtate, which in this life can be obtained, it will concern thee ſtudiouſly to obſerve theſe three things which I do add.

1. The firſt is, That in all things thou aim at God, and the honour of God, and not thy own, but chiefly at his will, & not thy own.

2. The ſecond is, That in all thy doings and turnings forth, thou ſtudiouſly obſerve thy ſelf, and take diligent notice of thy bottomleſs nothingneſs, and attend with continual diligence, what-ever thou be about, what is doing in thee; and laſtly, have an eye alwayes upon thy own ground.

3. The third is, That by no means thou intrude thy ſelf into thoſe things which are not committed to thee, but let all things alone in their own ſtate and order. Let thoſe things that are good, be good. But the evil judge thou not, but rather being turned into thine ground, there perſevere, diligently and ſedulouſly

dulouſly hearkning to the voice of thy Father, exhorting thee that thou abide in him conſtantly, even to the end.

Whoſoever ſhall obſerve theſe two things following, ſhal attain to great matters.

FIrſt, Let him be both inwardly and outwardly in Truth, and from his very ground and bottom, and not in words only, little and abject: Let him be (I ſay) in his whole underſtanding, in his ground, and in his own eyes, without any diſſimulation, wholly little and nothing. 1.

But, ſecondly, Let him be endowed with the love of God, not that ſenſual, which we call Love, but eſſential; that is, that he do inwardly in his ground purely intend God. Wherefore every one ought for this cauſe to be naked and freed from all ſelf animadverſion, underſtanding, and ſenſuality; becauſe God Almighty is naked and free, ſo thereby the Spirit may be fitted and prepared for his pure and naked eſſence: for ſo it is neceſſary that the ſoul be naked and empty, that it may be capable of his ſecret miſteries. Wherefore there is a neceſſity that every one endeavor to cut off all thoſe things, in which he findeth any thing of Self. 2.

Of

Of the DEATH *of the* MASTER, *and how after his Departure he appeared to his Friend the* LAYICK, *giving him an account of his ſevere and horrible departure out of the body; declaring that he endured that inſtead of his Purgatory: and alſo aſſuring him of that huge Joy, and everlaſting Felicity, which he had obtained from God by means of his wholſome Doctrine.*

HEre we muſt by no means let paſſe, how the oft before-mentioned Maſter, did daily make proficiency in a true, humble, and ſpiritual life, and encreaſed very much in vertue; Yea verily, he was made ſo ptudent in the grace of God, that whatever was to be done in that City or Country where he dwelt, whether it had been Spiritual or Secular, all much deſired to make uſe of his Counſel and Wiſdom, becauſe he was acceptable to them, and they had confidence in

in him, and puttruſt in him, and did obey his counſels. He made alſo very many Sermons, as well to Secular as Spiritual men, after the form of thoſe which we have already above recited. And when he had laudably finiſhed nine years in this ſo profitable and fruitful life, and (as it is ſaid) was acceptable and dear unto all in all that Country and Town. Theſe nine years being finiſhed, it pleaſed the moſt high God to receive unto himſelf this his Servant and beloved Friend, and no longer to leave him in this exile. And becauſe he had decreed to tranſlate him to the celeſtial Manſions without Purgatory, he ſuffered him to fall into grievous and laſting pain and ſickneſs of body, ſo that he lay for twenty weeks ſick of a Palſie, and ſuffered very ſharp torments.

When twenty weeks were now expired, he by Divine Grace underſtood not obſcurely, that within a few dayes he ſhould depart this world, and that God would put an end to his torments.

Knowing this, he deſired his ſervants that they would take care to bring his Layick unto him, and that they ſhould acquaint him with his approach and departure, and that he had no ſmall deſire to have him preſent

with him when he died. Without delay, when the Layick knew hereof, obeying the Maſter, he came to him ſpeedily; and being very familiarly received, he enquired how it was with him? To whom the Maſter anſwered, Truly I think that that day is not very far off, wherein the Lord will take me out of this world. Wherefore you may know that it will be very acceptable to me, and no leſſe comfortable, if you will vouchſafe your preſence with me when I die. But, ſaith he, I would entreat you, that you will take thoſe Paper Books, in which you ſhall find diligently written all whatever hath for a long time been ſpoken or tranſacted between us: There is alſo ſomething of my Life, ſome things which God vouchſafed to work by me, his miſerable and unworthy Servant. And, if you ſhall ſee fit, and the Lord grant leave, compile them all into one little Book.

To theſe things the Layick gave this Anſwer: Behold, Sir, I have by me five of your Sermons, which I writ from your mouth: if therefore you think fit, I will put them in among your other Writings, that of them all one little Volumn may be put forth under your Name.

To

To whom the Maſter anſwered; I entreat and beſeech you (dear ſon) with as much love as I am able, That you put not out any thing for my ſake, nor under my name. Neither indeed are they mine, neither would I they ſhould be known either in my life, or after my death. But they are all Gods, who vouchſafed to do them by me, a miſerable wretch. But yet if you do think that it may be profitable to my neighbours, and make for their edification, to publiſh thoſe things, I am not againſt it, but that they may be ſet forth, only with this caution, that you mention not me, or my name. But you may write after this manner, (to wit) *The Maſter ſaid, or did this or that*, alwayes concealing my name. But be careful of this, that when you have compiled this Book, you deliver it to no body in this City to read, leſt peradventure they ſhould apprehend it to be mine: but rather carry it away with you into your Country.

Finally, the Maſter had many other good diſcourſes with his Layick for eleven dayes together, even to the hour wherein he gave up the ghoſt.

When that hour was come, he ſaid thus

to he Layick: I would fain (dear ſon) have on your part your conſent, That if it ſhall pleaſe God, I may return unto you in ſpirit after my Death. To whom the Layick anſwered, If it ſhall (ſaid he) ſeem good unto God, I ſhall like it well that his will may be done in this matter.

Moreover, when the Maſter was even at the point of death, falling into an Agony, he expreſſed ſuch horrible and fearful geſtures, that his Brethren, and as many as were preſent, from the ſight of thoſe geſtures, fell into no ſmall fear, affright and ſorrow. And ſo at laſt he ended his laſt hour, as much as can be gathered from external ſigns, with great horror. And when he was now dead, almoſt all the City were moved, becauſe he was exceeding dear to them all univerſally.

Furthermore, when as ſome of that place had taken notice how familiarly the (oft-mentioned) Layick ſtuck to him to the laſt, they went about to honour him, and invite him to their feaſts. But when he perceived this, he preſently fled from the City into his own Country. Being onward upon his journey, and travelling now upon the third day, about Sun-ſet he came to a certain Village; And becauſe he could not farther travel by reaſon

reaſon it began to be dark, neither could find in that Village any publick Inn, he requeſted a certain honeſt man, whom by chance he met in the way, to lodge him and his ſervant, and bid him take of him what he pleaſed. To whom the man anſwered, that he was ready with a willing mind to do what he deſired, if he would accept of ſuch entertainment as he could make him: and accordingly took them in to lodge them: he lodged the Layick after the beſt faſhion he could, but brought his ſervant into a barn upon ſtraw. After they were layen down, the Layick being awake in the night, heard a kind of ſlender voice near him, yet could ſee nothing: thereby he began to be a little affrighted. Then the voice ſpake to him thus: *Fear not, dear ſon, for I am the Maſter.*

When the Layick heard this, he ſaid: I would very willingly know of you, Sir, if at leaſt it be the will of the Lord, how it is with you, and what was the cauſe, that, as far as we could perceive, you finiſhed your life ſo horribly and fearfully? Verily ſome of your Brethren began, as it were, to doubt of you; and truly I fear leſt your ſevere end hath offended ſome of them.

To

To which the voice of the Maſter anſwered thus: *I will even now open thoſe things to you. Be certain it was ſo decreed of God, that my ſoul aſſoon as it was gone out of my body, ſhould be received by the holy Angels, and by them be defended from the Devils, that they ſhould bring me no further trouble, nor that I ſhould any more ſee them, nor have any thing more to do with them afterwards; And therefore it behoved me to ſhut up my life with ſo fearful an end, and to undergo it inſtead of Purgatory. And in truth the malignant ſpirits did bind me faſt with ſo great perplexities, and did aſſault me with ſuch ſubtile and crafty falacies and deceits, that I thought I ſhould have utterly deſpaired: And if my voice had not been taken away, I had ſent forth ſuch cryes, that it had been wonderfull to have ſeen my calamity; hence might my Agony which my Brethren did diſcern, have been taken notice of. But God Almighty rendered me a plentiful reward for that pain and torment: for, aſ ſoon as my ſoul was gone out of my body, it was received by the holy Angels, who brought it into Paradiſe, telling me that there I muſt wait five dayes without fear or care; neither fear that the Devil ſhould henceforth*

do

do me any miſchief; and finally, that I ſhould undergo no more labour: only I ſhould want for thoſe five dayes the glorious ſociety of the heavenly Inhabitants; which being performed, I ſhould be wholly clean, and that then they would return with joy, and bring me with great exaltation into ineſtimable never to be ended joyes. More than this (dear ſon) enquire nothing of me, for I have now told you what-ever I can tell you; neither have I any licence to adde any thing further; But I beſeech my God that he would bleſſe you, and that he would be your eternal rewarder in everlaſting joyes, for that faithful Inſtruction and wholſom Counſel you gave me.

Then the Layick ſaid, I beſeech you my honored Maſter, when you ſhall come unto God, earneſtly intercede with him for me. After that, whatever the Laick did either ask or ſpeak, it was in vain, neither could he get ſo much as one anſwer more from him. Which when he perceived, he endeavoured as much as he could to take a little reſt, but in vain, for he could not ſleep one wink; and ſo lay awake, impatiently expecting day. Day breaking, he took his Pen and diligently wrote to the Prior and Brethren of

the

the dead Master, how he had appeared unto him, and all his words he had spoke to him.

The eternal Truth, our Lord JESUS CHRIST, grant to us, that we may conform our selves to his lovely and dilectable Image, and follow it to our utmost power, to his praise and glory. *Amen.*

To God Almighty thanks.

FINIS.